NATION

ED files chargesheet in digital arrest, I4C issues advisory

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BUSINESS

FMCG firms worry over high inflation, hint at price hikes

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SPORTS

Parthavi, Vanshika, Hemant win gold in U-19 Boxing c'ship

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SALAR

DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

سالار روزنامہ بنگلور

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US ELECTIONS DECODED

In this special 360 edition, Salar News gives a sneak-peak into the upcoming US presidential election on 5 November, where voters will choose the nation's 47th president and 50th vice president. Kamala Harris, 60, the Democratic nominee, aims to become the first woman and first woman of colour to hold the presidency. Donald Trump, 78, the Republican nominee, is running for the White House for the third consecutive time.

» MORE ON PAGE 2

BJP will start UCC in J'khand, tribals excluded, says Shah

He promises to return tribal lands occupied by infiltrators

RANCHI, 3 NOV

Union Home Minister Amit Shah on Sunday announced that the BJP will implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC) in Jharkhand if voted to power in the state, but would keep tribals out of its ambit.

Shah, while releasing the saffron party's manifesto, 'Sankalp Patra', for the upcoming Assembly elections in Jharkhand, announced that a Displacement Commission would be formed to ensure the rehabilitation of people displaced by industries and mines in the state.

"Our government will introduce UCC in Jharkhand but tribals will be kept out of its ambit. Hemant Soren and the JMM government are spreading false propaganda that UCC will impact tribal rights, culture and relevant legislation, which is totally baseless as they will be kept out of its ambit," Shah said in Ranchi.

He said that though UCC would be implemented, it will ensure that tribal rights are not impacted.

"The BJP, if voted to power in Jharkhand, will deliberate on the Sarna religious code issue, and take appropriate decisions," he said.

Shah promised that the BJP will bring in a stringent law to take back land from infiltrators in Jharkhand as well as to drive them out. "Hindus are under attack and appeasement is at its peak. Jharkhand is the most corrupt state in the country," he alleged.

There will be CBI and SIT probes into "paper leaks" in competitive exams in Jharkhand and culprits will be put behind the bars, he said. "Hemant Soren is sitting on the lap of Congress and RJD. He is asking for Rs 1.36 lakh-crore coal dues from the Centre. I want to make it clear that the UPA government gave only Rs 84,000 crore grant-in-aid between 2004 and 2014 whereas Prime Minister Modi gave Rs 3.08 lakh-crore from 2014-2024 in addition to funds for infrastructure and rail development," Shah claimed.

—PTI

>>>MORE ON P4

BJP'S POLL PROMISES FOR JHARKHAND

FINANCIAL AID
- Rs 2,100 per month to all women if voted to power.

LPG SUBSIDY
- LPG cylinders at Rs 500 each; free cylinders on Diwali and Rakshabandhan.

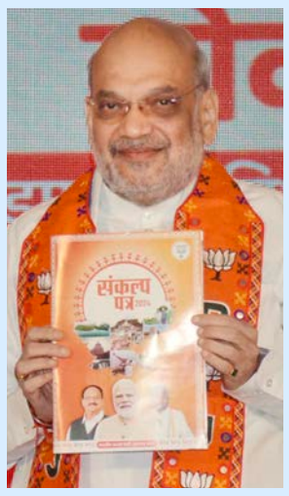
SUPPORT FOR FARMERS
- Paddy procurement at Rs 3,100 per quintal, with payments within 24 hours.
- Irrigation area to be tripled by 2030.
- Arhar Dal and Mahua included under the MSP programme.

EMPLOYMENT
- 500,000 job opportunities and 287,500 new government jobs.
- 150,000 government jobs to be filled in one year.

GRADUATE SUPPORT
- Rs 2,000 monthly stipend for two years for graduates struggling to start a career.

EDUCATION FOR GIRLS
- Free education for girls from kindergarten to post-graduation.

Infiltrators who tortured women in Jharkhand will be hanged upside down. Infiltrators are coming here and luring our daughters and marrying them and occupying the land. If this is not stopped, then Jharkhand's culture land, or daughters here will not be safe
—Amit Shah, Union Home Minister



Union Home Minister Amit Shah releases BJP's election manifesto in Ranchi PHOTO: PTI

HEIGHTENED TENSIONS

Pak conducted artillery tests near LoC: Officials

SRINAGAR, 3 NOV

PHOTO: FREEPIK

Pakistan has tested various artillery systems including a replica of the SH-15 and a 155 mm truck-mounted howitzer developed by a Chinese firm along the Line of Control (LoC) in Jammu and Kashmir, according to officials.

This comes as the neighbouring country strengthens defence ties with Gulf and Western European countries, and its long-standing ally Turkiye, the officials said.

The movement of the 155 mm guns, produced in collaboration with a Gulf nation under the supervision of a state-owned Chinese defence company, along the LoC was observed recently, they said.

The guns -- a variant of SH-15 that is known for its 'shoot and scoot' capability -- can fire a range of munitions, including high-explosive, armour-piercing and smoke rounds, boasting of a maximum range of approximately 30 kilometres and a firing rate of up to six rounds per minute.

Among the arsenal being tested is the refurbished M109, which has a firing range of 24km and can launch six shells in just 40 seconds. Initially acquired from a Western European country, this artillery system is now undergoing trials in its enhanced version, the officials said.

Turkiye has contributed to this military enhancement with the deployment of a modern 105 mm artillery piece manufactured by a Turkish defence company, FNSS, they said.

This medium-weight tank is equipped with a two-man turret armed with a standard 105 mm rifled gun capable of firing both armour-piercing and high-explosive ammunition.

China has also been instrumental in bolstering Pakistan's military capabilities along the LoC, according to the officials.

This assistance includes construction of fortified bunkers, provision of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), combat aerial vehicles, and advanced communication systems, the officials said.

—PTI

Kannada director Guruprasad found dead

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

Kannada film director Guruprasad was found hanging in a residential complex in the outskirts of the city on Sunday, police said. The 52-year-old director is suspected to have died by suicide. The incident occured in Madanayakanahalli police station limits. Guruprasad was known for his films - Mata, Yeddelu Manjunatha among others. According to police sources, the body was found in a decomposed state hanging from a ceiling fan in the flat, and neighbours alerted the police after foul smell emanated from the house.

>>>MORE ON P3

PHOTO: X

Threatening calls: Lawrence Bishnoi's brother booked

GURUGRAM, 3 NOV

Gurugram Police has booked gangster Anmol Bishnoi, brother of Lawrence Bishnoi, for allegedly threatening Bhim Sena chief Satpal Tanwar from abroad, an officer said on Sunday. Anmol is accused of making threatening calls from the US and Canada using numbers from Zimbabwe and Kenya. Police in the wake of the complaint constituted a team from the members of STF and several crime and cybercrime units for investigation. The officer said efforts are being made to bring Anmol Bishnoi to India. According to the complaint, Bhim Sena chief Satpal Tanwar received several calls from Anmol Bishnoi on 30 October with the threat that he would cut him in pieces.

—PTI

Rahul Gandhi PHOTO: PTI

RAGA EMPHASISES NEED TO PROTECT INDIA'S CONSTITUTION

WAYANAD, 3 NOV

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday emphasised that the primary struggle in the country today is to protect and preserve the Constitution.

He said the Constitution of the country was not written with hatred, but with humility and love.

"The main fight in the country today, that is taking place, is the fight for the Constitution of our country. The protection that we get, the greatness of our country, all emerged from the Constitution," the Lok Sabha MP said while addressing a corner meeting in Mananthavady here as part of the campaign for his sister Priyanka Gandhi Vadra. Priyanka is Congress candidate for the Wayanad byelection. "The Constitution was not written with anger or with hatred. It was written by the people who fought the British, the people who had suffered, who spent years and years and years in jail. And they wrote the Constitution with humility, with love and with affection," he said.

—PTI

>>>MORE ON P4

UP boy dies as 56 metal pieces found in stomach

HATHRAS, 3 NOV

PHOTO: SCREENGRAB

A 15-year-old boy from Uttar Pradesh's Hathras died a day after a major surgery was performed on him at a Delhi hospital to remove an astonishing 56 objects such as watch batteries, blades, nails and other metal fragments from his stomach.

The discovery of multiple foreign objects inside the body of Aditya Sharma, a Class 9 student, has left the medical community perplexed and his family shaken, the boy's father Sanchit Sharma, a Hathras-based medical representative, told PTI. The boy died a day after the surgery at Safdarjung Hospital as his heart rate spiked and his BP dropped alarmingly, his father said.

The foreign objects inside Aditya's stomach were detected during multiple medical check-ups in different hospitals in Uttar Pradesh, Jaipur, and Delhi, Sanchit said.

He said his family's ordeal started after his son complained of severe stomach pain and breathing difficulties. A post-surgery ultrasound at the Aligarh hospital on 26 October revealed presence of about 19 items inside Aditya's body, following which doctors referred him to a more advanced medical facility in Noida.Another scan revealed presence of about 56 metal fragments, which led to the family moving the boy to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital where a major surgery was performed on him on 27 October. —PTI

- Another scan revealed presence of about 56 metal fragments, which led to the family moving the boy to Delhi's Safdarjung Hospital where a major surgery was performed on him on 27 October

Some progress in disengagement, other steps soon, says Jaishankar

BRISBANE, 3 NOV

India and China have made "some progress" in disengagement, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar said on Sunday, describing it as a "welcome" move which opens up the possibility that other steps could happen.

His comment comes days after Indian and Chinese troops completed disengagement at two friction points at Demchok and Depsang Plains in eastern Ladakh. The Indian Army commenced verification patrolling at Depsang while patrolling at Demchok started on Friday.

S Jaishankar PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

"In terms of India and China, yes, we have made some progress. You know, our relations were very, very disturbed for reasons all of you know. We have made some progress in what we call disengagement, which is when troops were very close to each other, with the possibility that could lead to some untoward incident," Jaishankar said while responding to a question during interaction with the Indian diaspora here.

He said that the expectation after Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Chinese President Xi Jinping in Russia last month was that "both the national security advisor and myself, we would meet our counterpart. So that's where things are".

Jaishankar said that there are right now two conflicts, which are in everybody's mind. —PTI

11 INJURED IN GRENADE ATTACK IN SRINAGAR

SRINAGAR, 3 NOV

At least 11 people were injured when terrorists threw a grenade in a crowded flea market in the heart of the city here on Sunday, officials said.

The attack comes a day after a top Pakistani commander of Lashkar-e-Taiba was eliminated by security forces in the Khanyar locality. In another development, security forces have arrested a terrorist associate linked with the proscribed terror outfit Hizbul Mujahideen in Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district. —PTI

>>>MORE ON P4

Entry fee hiked at Lalbagh

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

The Horticulture Department has announced a hike increase in the entry fee for Lalbagh Botanical Garden in the City with immediate effect.

Under the new rates, the entry fee has been raised from Rs 30 to Rs 50 for visitors over 12 years old. Children between the ages of six and 12 will now be charged Rs 20.

Officials from the Department stated that the fee hike was discussed at both the department and government levels. The department cited ongoing expenses for garden development as the reason behind the increase.

The decision however received mixed responses from visitors. Vignesh, a resident of Jayanagar said, "People come here with their families, and paying Rs 50 per person is quite a lot." Echoing the same sentiment, another visitor, Abhilash, said that public opinion wasn't considered."The garden attracts people from different walks of life, and this increase will be a burden," he said. Previously, the entry fee for visitors over 12 was Rs 25, which was raised by Rs 5 in 2021. Many visitors are now surprised by this sudden increase, viewing it as an unexpected expense. —*Salar News*

KIWIS FLY HIGH

After 91 yrs, India whitewashed 0-3 at home

MUMBAI, 3 NOV

New Zealand players celebrate their win against India at Wankhede Stadium, in Mumbai, on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

The fortress had been breached already. On Sunday, it just crumbled to the ground with the Indian dressing room sitting stone-faced, trying to process a fall so spectacular that nobody saw it coming.

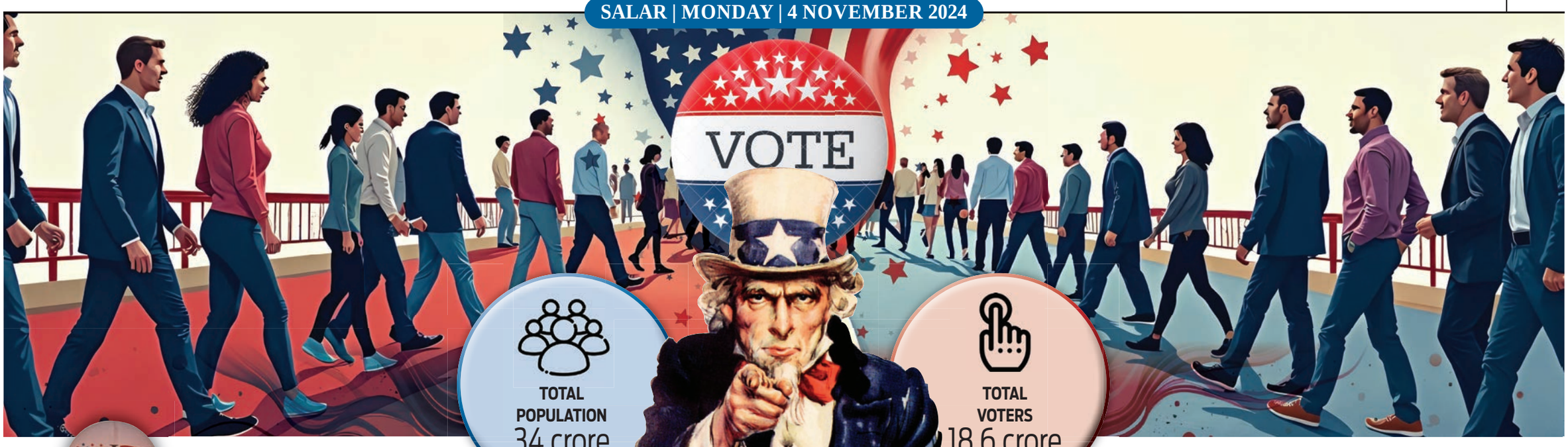
For the first time in their Test history, which goes back to 1933, the 'Tigers' at home had been whitewashed in a series of three or more games.

The 25-run loss in the third Test in front of a buzzing Wankhede crowd, was a stunning reminder of how fortunes swing wildly in sport.

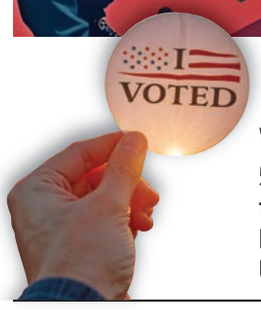
The last time India suffered a humiliation of this scale was more than two decades ago in 2000 when it lost 0-2 to South Africa.

It wasn't an unfair expectation; the chase was a mere 147 runs but it was on a track that looked like a minefield to the entire home line-up except Rishabh Pant (64). Five key wickets were lost for a mere 16 runs at the start of an embarrassing collapse with the Jogeshwari's very own Ajaz Patel making them dance to his tunes for a haul of 11 wickets in the match. The left-arm spinner now has a staggering 25 Test wickets at the Wankhede in just two matches, making him the most successful overseas bowler at the venue after the great Ian Botham (22). "Something like this will be a very low point of my career and I take full responsibility for it. With the bat, I was not good enough," a desolate skipper Rohit Sharma admitted in the post-match press conference struggling to explain clearly just what has gone so wrong with this team. With this truly humbling result, the Indians were thrown off the top position in the World Test Championship points table. —PTI

>>>MORE ON P8



US ELECTIONS DECODED



WHEN DOES THE US VOTE?

5 November, 2024. Congress designated the first Tuesday after the first Monday in November as Election Day back in 1845. US elects its president every 4 years

US PRESIDENT MUST BE

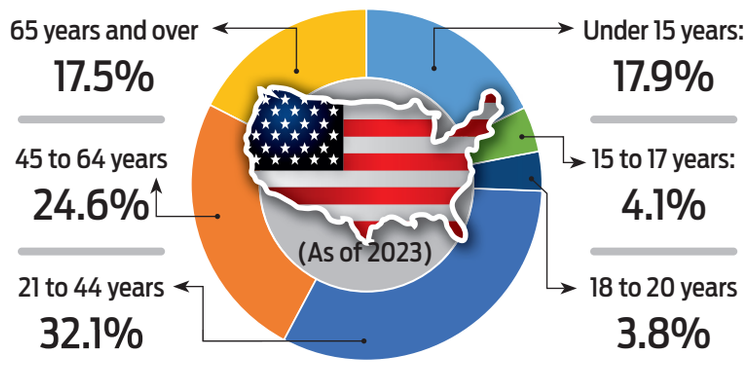
A natural-born citizen of the US.

At least **35** years old.

A resident of the United States for **14 yrs**

DEMOGRAPHICS

POPULATION: 3,45,901,546



PREZ CANDIDATES

KAMALA HARRIS
59, Democrat

- Net Worth: $8 million
- Began her career as a lawyer
- Former junior senator for California (2017-2021)
- First female, African American and Asian American Vice President
- 49th and current VP since 2021 serving with President Joe Biden

PROMISES

1. Restore federal right to abortion if Congress passes one
2. Expand the child tax credit to up to $6,000 from $2,000 for newborn children
3. Construct 3 million new homes over four years
4. $25,000 down-payment assistance for first-time home buyers
5. Ban assault weapons amid mass shootings
6. Sign bipartisan border security bill earlier killed by Trump to speed up asylum process

The US election is anything but simple. The counting for the US presidential election will begin on 5 November, but the result could take few days.

SALAR NEWS untangles the knotty election process and what's at stake for the American democracy.

DONALD TRUMP
78, Republican

- Net Worth: $7.5 billion
- Media personality and businessman.
- Economics graduate from University of Pennsylvania.
- Took over family business, renamed it as Trump Organization and focussed on skyscrapers and resorts (1971)
- 45th US president from 2017 to 2021
- Third US president to be impeached

PROMISES

1. End war in Ukraine before Inauguration Day (20 Jan, 2025)
2. Seal the border, stop migrants, carry out the largest deportation
3. 10% import tariff, tax cuts and make US a crypto capital
4. Build iron dome missile defence shield over US
5. Keep US dollar as the world's reserve currency
6. Cut funding to schools that teach "critical race theory" and "transgender" matters

RUNNING MATES

TIM WALZ, 60, Democratic

- Former schoolteacher and a retired US Army officer
- Was a member of US House of Representatives (2007-2019)
- Governor of Minnesota since 2019
- He is under fire over a love affair with the daughter of a Chinese Communist Party official in 1989 and allegedly driving her to the brink of suicide.

IMPACT ON INDIA

HARRIS

- Likely to continue trade pacts under Biden administration.
- Favours expanding H-1B, which is crucial for India's IT sector.
- Harris aims to strengthen Indo-Pacific partnerships to counterbalance China's influence.
- Harris proposes lowering drug prices, which could benefit Indian pharmaceuticals.

TRUMP

- May revive heavy tariffs that might hit India's trade.
- May tighten immigration rule impacting H1B visas.
- Focus on traditional energy sources could lower crude prices. Trump is endorsed by Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla, which is of India's interest.
- Trump has supported India's role in countering China. Hails Modi's policies.

RUNNING MATES

JD VANCE, 40, Republican

- Author, venture capitalist and Marine veteran who served in Iraq War
- During 2016 presidential campaign, Vance was a critic of Trump, calling him "America's Hitler".
- Ohio junior senator since 2023
- Is against immigration, abortion and IVF treatments
- Under fire for "Childless cat ladies remark"

THEIR STAND ON...

ABORTION

TRUMP: Opposes Roe vs Wade verdict and supports its overturning, advocating for state-level restrictions on abortion.

HARRIS: Vows to sign legislation that restored protections under Roe vs Wade. Says Trump will take away fertility treatments next.

UKRAINE AND GAZA

TRUMP: Says will end Ukraine war as he "has excellent ties with Vladimir Putin and Volodymyr Zelensky". Calls Harris anti-Israel and anti-Arab.

HARRIS: Backs Ukraine while accusing Russia of violating sovereignty and territorial integrity. Condemned Hamas' terror attack against Israel and bats for a two-state solution.

ELECTION PROCESS STARTS A YEAR BEFORE VOTING DAY

Candidates from the two main political parties —Democrats and Republicans — begin their campaigns to seek votes and raise funds. Here are the steps.

STEP 1: Primaries and Caucuses

PRIMARY

- Primaries are state-level elections where party members vote to select their presidential candidates.
- They are held 6-9 months ahead of the election and take place in voting booths.
- US states conduct primary elections.

CAUCUSES

- Caucuses are organised by the parties.
- Take place at precinct, district and state level in places such as schools, churches, and community centres.
- Campaign representatives make speeches on behalf of their candidates and caucus-goers vote.

The votes are tallied after which delegates are awarded to each candidate based on the votes.

- These delegates represent the state's voters at the national convention (see below).
- To become the presidential nominee, a candidate has to win a majority of delegates.

Primaries and caucuses can be open - with anyone allowed to take part - or closed, meaning only registered party members can vote.

STEP 2: National Convention

- Each party then holds a national convention to select a presidential nominee.
- Delegates from each state chosen during the primaries and caucuses will "endorse" their favourite candidates.
- The candidate with most endorsements will be presidential nominee.
- Presidential nominee chooses a "running mate" – a Vice Presidential candidate.

STEP 3: Presidential debate

Democrat and Republican candidates participate in televised debates about their policies.

STEP 4: General elections

- On 5 Nov, people in every state will vote.
- However, this is where the voting process gets complex. When people vote, they are not directly voting for President or VP. Instead, they vote for "electors" – members of the Electoral College– who directly elect the president and VP in mid-December.

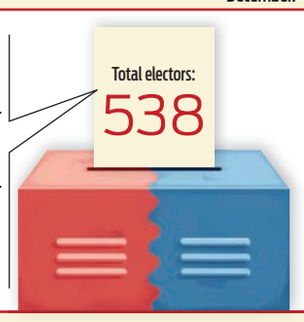
STEP 5: Electoral collage

- Each state has a number of electors depending on its population. Each State gets the same number of electors as its members of Congress, both House and Senate. Washington DC has three electors.
- Number of electors in each state is equal to the number of its House members plus two - number of US senators from every state. Eg: Since California has 52 House members and 2 senators, it gets 54 Electoral College votes.

435 representatives from Congress

100 Senators

3 additional voters from District of Columbia



- The votes go to a statewide tally. In all States except Nebraska and Maine, the candidate who gets the most votes gets all its electoral votes. If they win the state by 1 per cent, they win 100 per cent of electoral votes. In Nebraska and Maine however, the popular winner gets 2 electoral votes and the rest is allocated to the winner of each congressional district.

WHEN ARE THE RESULTS?

- The winning candidate needs a majority of 270 electoral votes.
- If no candidate gets an absolute majority, then the House of Representatives elects the president.
- The newly elected President and Vice President take charge on 20 January.
- Americans will also elect people to fill various federal, state and local positions.

POPULARITY NO GUARANTEE FOR WIN

Because of the Electoral College, the most popular candidate may not be elected president. This happened in 2016, when Hillary Clinton got almost 3 million more votes than Donald Trump but he won the presidency with 304 Electoral College votes to her 227.

THE SWING STATES ARE

- Arizona (electoral votes: 11)
- Georgia (16)
- Michigan (15)
- Nevada (6)
- North Carolina (16)
- Pennsylvania (19)
- Wisconsin (10)

SWING STATES ARE KINGMAKERS

A swing state is where both major political parties have equal support. The electoral votes here can decide presidential outcomes, prompting candidates to focus their campaigns on swaying undecided voters

RESEARCH: AMINA AFAQ, ANAMIKA HOLLA DESIGN: G. VISHWANATHA

AFTERMATH OF DEEPAVALI

A man gets treatment for firecracker-related eye injury at Minto Hospital in Bengaluru on Sunday. In the last three days, at least 50 people have been treated for eye injuries in the City

PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD

Gang stealing high-end cars busted in City

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

The Annapoorneshwari Nagar police busted a three-member gang allegedly involved in stealing high-end and luxurious cars from parking lots in residential and commercial neighbourhoods in the City. An officer told **Salar News**, "All the suspects have learned a method from the Internet to steal cars by hacking their software. They used a device worth Rs 1 lakh to unlock and start the vehicle without setting off the alarm. Even, they use master keys to open the doors and use magnets to unlock the steering wheels," the official said. The officer said that the three accused were just a part of a bigger gang that operates from Rajasthan. It was revealed that the gang would travel by flights to different cities from their native and steal the cars. So far the police have detected the gang's involvement in two vehicle theft cases in Byadarahalli and Annapoorneshwari police station limits. Both vehicles were recovered after the arrest.

—Salar News

3 cousins drown in Chikkaballapur

CHIKKABALLAPUR, 3 NOV

Three cousins drowned while they were playing in Chikkaballapur district, on Sunday. The deceased have been identified as Ranjit, 27, Ramya, 24, and Abhilash, 22. The incident took place at around 1pm when six youth of the family including the deceased went playing in the water. They were unaware of the depth of the water and tried to swim back but drowned. It is reported that about 20 family members belonging to a particular family, had assembled at their village to celebrate the festival. Among the deceased, Ranjith was an employee at a private firm in Bengaluru, while Ramya was persuing her MBA course in Bengaluru, Abhilash had completed his diploma course and was in search of a job. Fire force personnel, with the help of villagers, were able to lift the bodies from the waters. A case has been registered.

—Salar News

City woman dies after being hit by speeding car

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

A 30-year-old pedestrian died after she was mowed down by a speeding car in Kengeri. The police identified the deceased as Sandhya, 30, a resident of Basaveshwara Nagar in the City and an employee at a private firm in Kengeri. The incident took place around 7pm on Saturday when she was crossing the road to take bus ride home. According to the police, a speeding car knocked her down due to which the woman suffered severe injuries. She was immediately rushed to a private hospital nearby where she succumbed without responding to the treatment. Meanwhile with the help of the locals, the police detained the car driver who was found to be in an inebriated state. A case has been booked against the driver and his vehicle has been seized. Further investigation is on.

—Salar News

BJP & Cong spar over CM's Wafq notice withdrawal

Ex-CM Bommai urges CM to order SIT or CBI probe

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

Karnataka Legislative Council LoP Chalavadi Narayanaswamy reacted to Chief Minister Siddaramaiah's orders of immediate withdrawal of waqf notice to farmers, saying that it is just an "eyewash" to win the local elections.

Speaking to ANI, Chalavadi Narayanaswamy said, "Now, you've given the order to withdraw the notices. But still, in the gazette, it is only Waqf's property. So this is not a solution at all. I will immediately request Siddaramaiah to withdraw the 1974 gazette. Otherwise, it is just an eyewash to win the local elections. This will not bring any relief to the farmers."

BJP spokesperson Shehzad Poonawalla said that the government has become "a U-turn expert".

"The Karnataka government has now become a U-turn expert. First, it says that there was no MUDA scam, and then it returns to the land of the MUDA scam. Now Siddaramaiah has ordered that no farmer's land will be taken," Shehzad Poonawalla told ANI.

Karnataka Minister and Congress leader Priyank Kharge slammed BJP for a row over waqf notice to farmers and dubbed the allegations 'politically motivated."

Former Karnataka Chief Minister and BJP leader Basavraj Bommai called the State government's decision to retract all notices related to Waqf land issues a "distraction" done to ward off farmers' wrath during the by-elections.

Earlier on 2 November, Siddaramaiah issued a strict directive to officials to immediately retract all notices sent to farmers *PHOTO: PTI*

- Karnataka Minister and Congress leader Priyank Kharge slammed BJP for a row over waqf notice to farmers and dubbed the allegations 'politically motivated'

Former Karnataka Chief Minister and BJP MP Basavaraj Bommai on Sunday urged Chief Minister Siddaramaiah to immediately order a Special Investigation Team or CBI probe to take action based on the Anwar Manippady report on encroachment of Waqf properties.

Earlier on 2 November, Siddaramaiah issued a strict directive to officials to immediately retract all notices sent to farmers concerning waqf land issues. *—PTI/ANI*

SUICIDE SUSPECTED

Kannada director Guruprasad found hanging in City flat

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

Kannada film director Guruprasad was found hanging in a residential complex in the outskirts of the city on Sunday, police said.

The 52-year-old director is suspected to have died by suicide. The incident occured in Madanayakanahalli limits.

"Film maker Guruprasad was said to be upset about something, about his film or some other issue. We have heard that he was facing financial stress... five to six days back, neighbours had seen him coming to this house, after that he had apparently not stepped out. It appears that he hanged himself five to six days back and died," CK Baba, Superintendent of Police (SP),.

Briefing reporters, he said, "... after seeing the body, we have registered the case and we will investigate matter."

Guruprasad was known for his films - Mata, Yeddelu Manjunatha among others.

PHOTO: PTI

Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar took to his X account to express his shock and wrote, "I am deeply saddened to learn of the demise of Guruprasad, a creative director and a native of Kanakpur. I pray that the soul of Guruprasad, who contributed his own style to silver screen and television, may rest in peace.. Om Shanti," he posted on X.

According to police sources, the body was found in a decomposed state hanging from a ceiling fan in the flat, and neighbours alerted the police after foul smell emanated from the house. *—PTI*

REVIVAL OF ULSOOR LAKE

Many floating pots were placed in Ulsoor Lake, Bengaluru, on Sunday, to enhance the beauty of the lake, which is famous among City walkers *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Not engaging in below-the-belt attacks: JD(S)'s Nikhil to DKS

CHANNAPATNA, 3 NOV

Reacting to Karnataka Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar's critical comments about his father and Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy, JD (S) leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy said that he is focusing on development-oriented politics and that he does not want to engage in personal and below-the-belt attacks.

"Everyone speaks according to their background and culture," Nikhil told ANI. "I have no intention of responding to every comment."

Indirectly referencing DK Shivakumar, Nikhil added, "Our focus is on development politics. Whatever strategies our opponents employ, I am not provoked by any of it."

JD(S) leader Nikhil Kumaraswamy *PHOTO: PTI*

He also highlighted the support he has received from the BJP. "We have strong backing from the BJP BS Yediyurappa himself has announced my name as NDA candidate," Nikhil stated.

On Saturday, Shivakumar took a dig at Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy for allegedly shedding crocodile tears during elections and disappearing when people are in pain.

"Kumaraswamy and his wife represented Channapatna. The present JDS candidate doesn't have anything to do with the constituency and he has already lost in Mandya and Ramanagara. Yogeshwar has come back to Congress because only our party has done developmental works in Channapatna," Shivakumar had said.

Nikhil is the NDA candidate for the Channapatna Assembly by-election.

Nikhil is up against CP Yogeshwara who recently switched sides from the BJP to the Congress. *—ANI*

Food delivery executive crushed to death in City

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

A food delivery executive was killed when a speeding car crashed into his bike and ran over him in Basavanagudi traffic police station limits.

The traffic police told **Salar News** that the incident took place on Saturday night when the deceased, Manjunath, 26, a resident of Chamarajpet, was on his way to his in-laws' house in Kempegowda Nagar to meet his wife.

Around 10.15pm, when he was riding near Seetharamaiah Road, a speeding car rammed into his bike and ran over him.

A few residents noticed the accident and rushed to help him.

However Manjunath died on the way while he was being taken to a hospital.

The police also added that the car driver fled the scene after the incident and a search has been initiated to nab him. The officers are analysing the CCTV around the area for clues, he added. *—Salar News*

KPCC asks BJP to release docu on MUDA scam

MYSURU, 3 NOV

Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) Spokesperson M Lakshmana on Sunday urged BJP leaders to release documents, including a list of beneficiaries who have obtained sites under the controversial 50:50 site allotment scheme in the Mysuru Urban Development Authority (MUDA). He also demanded that all relevant documents be submitted to the State Lokayukta investigating the MUDA scam.

Speaking to reporters, Lakshmana alleged that a Rs 5,000 crore scam occurred in MUDA. He emphasised that the 50:50 site allotment scheme was introduced by the BJP government, not by the Congress. He further claimed that BJP's allegations were an attempt to tarnish the image of Chief Minister Siddaramaiah.

KPCC spokesperson M Lakshmana *PHOTO: PTI*

Lakshmana also criticised Krishnaraja MLA TS Srivatsa, accusing him of seeking publicity after Chief Minister Siddaramaiah directed State Urban Development Secretary Deepa Cholan to respond to Srivatsa's letter, requesting the cancellation of the 50:50 site allotment scheme. "It is the routine duty of the Chief Minister's office to reply to such letters; there's nothing special about this," he stated. *—Salar News*

UP man 'forced to lick own spit' by police, probe on

RAEBARELI, 3 NOV

A village head's representative in Nasirabad area here was allegedly forced to lick his own spit by the local police for "creating chaos" during a 'nautanki' programme organised without permission from the authorities, officials said on Sunday.

Superintendent of Police (Raebareli) Yashveer Singh said the allegations are being investigated by the additional superintendent of police and action will be taken based on his report.

Sushil Sharma, the representative of the head of Kapurpur village in Nasirabad, organised a 'Nautanki' programme without permission on 30 October, Singh said in a statement.

Sharma claimed that he and four others were detained and physically assaulted at the local police station while he was made to lick his own spit. He also accused Nasirabad SHO Shivakant Pandey of demanding a bribe of Rs 2 lakh from him. *—PTI*

Matrimonial site ordered to refund ₹60,000 to client

BENGALURU, 3 NOV

A consumer court has ordered Dilmil Matrimony to pay Rs 60,000 to Vijaya Kumar KS, a resident of Maruthi Seva Nagar, after the portal failed to find a match for his son despite assurances.

Kumar approached the matrimony in March and had paid Rs 30,000 to the matrimony in Kalyan Nagar, expecting a match for his son Balaji within 45 days.

Despite multiple follow-ups and visits no profiles were provided.

Kumar alleged that the staff verbally abused him when he requested a refund in April.

Court stated that the firm is liable to refund the amount along with other beliefs granted in the complaint *PHOTO: X*

Following the incident, Kumar sought legal assistance, sending a notice to the firm in May.

On 28 October, after hearing both side's arguments the consumer court ruled in favour of Kumar, finding Dilmil Matrimony guilty of service deficiencies and unfair trade practices.

After which it ordered the portal to refund the amount, with the additional compensation of Rs 30,000 for the inconvenience caused. *—Salar News*

FOR EASY TRAVEL

Bandipur tourists want streamlining of green tax

MYSURU, 3 NOV

Travellers passing through the picturesque Bandipur forests in Chamarajanagar district have asked the forest department to streamline the green tax collection process at its four check-posts along with National Highways 766 and 67.

Raghavendra, a tourist told **Salar News** that even though the collection of green tax is a wise decision, it must introduce FASTag for toll collection. Speaking to Salar News, Bandipur Tiger Reserve Project Director S Prabhakaran said that his department will deploy the additional staff during weekend days for collection of tax at its checkposts to avoid vehicles queuing.

Hundreds of vehicles queue up during the weekends to pay green tax, causing inconvenience to tourists *PHOTO: X*

Another driver said the increasing number of vehicles moving along the stretch during weekend holidays, is resulting in traffic congestion.

Since the forest department has stopped all vehicles at its three checkposts at Melukamanahalli, Maddur, Moolehole, and Kekkanahalla, hundreds of vehicles are queuing up during weekend days to pay green tax, causing inconvenience to tourists coming from Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

- The foresters have been collecting the green cess from four-wheelers and heavy vehicles, and goods vehicles passing through the tiger sanctuary since last year

The foresters have been collecting the green cess from four-wheelers and heavy vehicles, and goods vehicles passing through the tiger sanctuary since April last year. The department collects Rs 20 for four-wheelers and Rs 50 for heavy vehicles. *—Salar News*

With joint spirit we'll work towards TB-free India: PM

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said the decline in TB incidence is an outcome of India's dedicated and innovative efforts, and asserted that "we will keep working towards a TB-free India" through a collective spirit.

His remarks came in response to a post by Health Minister J P Nadda in which he stated that the World Health Organisation (WHO) has recognised India's "remarkable" progress, with a 17.7 per cent decline in TB incidence from 2015 to 2023 - a rate more than double the global decline of 8.3 per cent.

"Through a collective spirit, we will keep working towards a TB-free India," the prime minister said.

In his remarks on Saturday, Nadda said, "Under the visionary leadership of PM Shri Narendra Modi ji, our government has expanded and strengthened the National TB Elimination Programme by taking key initiatives such as the Ni-Kshay Poshan Yojana to provide essential nutritional support to TB patients, and introduction of the BPALM regimen. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Nawab Malik's son-in-law dies due to accident

MUMBAI, 3 NOV

Former Maharashtra minister and NCP leader Nawab Malik's son-in-law Sameer Khan died on Sunday after sustaining injuries in an accident in September. Informing about the development, Malik, in a message on X, said, "As we mourn this loss, all my schedule for the next two days are postponed. Thank you for your understanding. Pl keep him in your prayers." Malik is the NCP candidate from Mumbai's Mankhurd-Shivajinagar seat for 20 November assembly polls. *—PTI*

Sunil & Sat Sharma elected as BJP party leaders in J&K

SRINAGAR, 3 NOV

Former minister Sunil Sharma was elected as the leader of the Jammu and Kashmir BJP legislature party on Sunday. The MLA from Padder Nagseni in the Kishtwar district is geared up to be the leader of Opposition in the Jammu and Kashmir assembly. "Sunil Sharma has been elected as the BJP legislature party leader. He will be the leader of the opposition in the assembly," a BJP spokesman said after a meeting. Meanwhile, Former minister Sat Paul Sharma returned as the head of the Jammu and Kashmir unit of BJP, a post he had held for two-and-a-half. Sharma, 63, was denied a party ticket in the recent assembly election and was appointed as working president of the party in September amid resentment over ticket distribution and is now elevated to the post of president, replacing party's longest-serving president. *—PTI*

NC's Abdul Rahim likely to be J&K Assembly speaker

SRINAGAR, 3 NOV

Veteran National Conference leader and seven-time MLA from Charar-e-Sharief, Abdul Rahim Rather, is poised to become the first speaker of the Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly as it resonates for a five-day session on Monday. The Assembly Secretariat's provisional calendar shows that the election for speaker will take place in the first session. National Conference sources indicate that rather, 80 year old, is the likely candidate, with treasury benches reportedly holding enough to secure his position. A senior NC leader stated, "Rather sahib is all set to be the speaker." He previously served as speaker in the assembly of the former state of Jammu and Kashmir and as leader of the opposition from 2002 to 2008. Meanwhile, the BJP has nominated Narinder Singh Raina for deputy speaker. *—PTI*

Six militants arrested in Manipur

IMPHAL, 3 NOV

Six militants belonging to two proscribed outfits have been arrested in Manipur's Thoubal and Bishnupur districts, a police statement said. Five militants of Kangleipak Communist Party (People's War Group) have been apprehended from Charangpat Mayai Leikai in Thoubal for their alleged involvement in abduction and extortion. They were identified as Thokchom Bikram Singh, 29, Sinam Bijen Singh, 37, Thangjam Deepak Singh, 30, Lambamayum Naobi Singh, 26, and Huiningsumbam Ton Singh, 21, the statement said. A hand grenade, five demand letters of the outfit, five mobile handsets, 13 SIM cards and a four-wheeler were seized from their possession during their arrest on Friday. In another incident, police arrested one militant belonging to the PREPAK (PRO) outfit from Kumbi area in Bishnupur district on Saturday. *—PTI*

Why does BJP delay J'khand funds: Cong

Cong seeks account for delay of Rs 1.36L cr

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Congress on Sunday said BJP must give an account for the delay of releasing Rs 1.36 lakh crore to Jharkhand in the form of pending coal royalties before seeking votes from the people.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh claimed the Centre owes Jharkhand lakhs of crores of rupees in coal royalties and central scheme benefits.

In Jharkhand, coal mines are operated by subsidiaries of the Coal India Limited which owe huge sums of money to the state government, he claimed.

There is an outstanding of Rs 1,01,142 crore for "non-payment of land compensation", Rs 32,000 crore under "common cause dues" head, and Rs 2,500 crore under "washed coal royalty" head, the Congress leader said.

Questioning Jharkhand unit of the BJP, he asked why it failed to secure funds for the state and why was the prime minister silent.

The first phase of assembly polls in Jharkhand will also be held on 13 November.

Meanwhile, Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said people will get 7 kg of ration instead of the existing 5 kg per month under the public distribution system (PDS) if the JMM-led alliance is voted to power. He said Jharkhand Mukti Morcha-led alliance would also increase the pension amount. Soren alleged that 11 lakh ration cards and three lakh pensions were cancelled during the BJP regime in Jharkhand, which resulted in death of several tribal, dalits due to hunger. *—PTI*

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh claimed the Centre owes Jharkhand lakhs of crores of rupees in coal royalties **PHOTO: PTI**

- Jharkhand Chief Minister Hemant Soren said people will get 7 kg of ration instead of the existing 5 kg per month under the public distribution system (PDS) if JMM-led alliance is voted to power

Nawab: Ajit will be key M'rashtra player

Cong slams Mahayuti for neglecting farmers

MUMBAI, 3 NOV

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister and NCP chief Ajit Pawar will emerge as a key player after 20 November assembly polls in the state, predicted former minister Nawab Malik on Sunday.

In an interview with PTI over the phone, the NCP candidate from Mumbai's Mankhurd-Shivajinagar seat said the politics of ideology is over in Maharashtra and nobody knows who will side with which party.

"There are even speculations that NCP (SP) chief Sharad Pawar and Eknath Shinde, who heads the Shiv Sena, will join hands," he claimed.

NCP working president Praful Patel has said the candidature of Nawab Malik on his party's ticket for the upcoming Maharashtra assembly polls will not impact the prospects of Mahayuti elsewhere in the state.

BJP has made it clear that it will not campaign for Nawab Malik, but has no objection to his daughter's candidature.

Nawab Malik says politics of ideology is over in Maharashtra and nobody knows who will side with which party **PHOTO: PTI**

Cong hits out at Mahayuti, says farmers neglected

Congress on Sunday hit out at the ruling Mahayuti coalition in Maharashtra, saying it has been formed on "betrayal" and that the people of the state will not forgive them for their "failed" promises.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh alleged that farmers were the most neglected in the state as the grand promises made to them have yielded nothing.

Meawhile, Congress rebel Jayashri Patil, who has filed her nomination as an Independent from the Sangli seat, met Maratha quota activist Manoj Jarange on Sunday seeking support for the Maharashtra assembly election.

Congress chief Nana Patole on Sunday urged the Centre to ban cotton imports, claiming it was affecting farmers, and demanded the produce be purchased at the MSP of Rs 7,122. *—PTI*

'NDA's aim is to stay in power at any cost'

AICC Secretary Mansoor Ali Khan with Congress candidate Priyanka Gandhi Vadra during her campaign in Wayanad on Sunday **PHOTO: SALAR**

WAYANAD, 3 NOV

Congress leader and party candidate for Wayanad Lok Sabha bypoll Priyanka Gandhi Vadra on Sunday slammed the Modi-led central government, saying it gives priority to big business interests over the well-being of the people.

Addressing a rally in Wayanad, Priyanka Gandhi Vadra said, "Modi ji's government works only for his big businessman friends. His objective is not to give you a better life. It is not to find new jobs. It is not to provide better health or education initiatives and programs. It is simply to stay in power by any means possible. And what are those means? Those means are dividing you, spreading anger, spreading hatred amongst you, Taking your rights away from you oppressing democratic institutions."

She praised the people of Wayanad for standing up for what is right and fighting against oppressors. Wayanad will go to the polls on 13 November along with voting for elections in 47 seats across 15 states. *—ANI*

UP bypolls: Parties engage in slogan war

LUCKNOW, 3 NOV

The age-old saying of 'united we stand, divided we fall' seems to be strongly resonating in the bypolls-bound Uttar Pradesh, with leaders of various political parties coining their slogans, which revolve around this famous line.

While Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath coined 'batenge toh katenge' (divided we fall) much before the bypolls were announced, a Samajwadi Party worker from the Deoria district put up a hoarding outside the party's office in Lucknow, which read 'judenge to jeetenge' (united we win).

The hoardings by another SP worker from the Maharajganj district says 'na batenge, na katenge, PDA ke sang rahenge' (we will neither get divided nor we will fall) and 'PDA jodegi aur jeetegi' (PDA will unite and win).

Meanwhile, BSP chief Mayawati on Saturday slammed the SP and the BJP for their "misleading" slogans. *—PTI*

'SAME FATE AS SIDDIQUE'

Woman held for threatening to harm UP CM

MUMBAI, 3 NOV

The Mumbai police have arrested a 24-year-old woman for allegedly giving a death threat to Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath, an official said on Sunday.

The woman, identified as Fatima Khan, who has done BSc in Information Technology, resided in Ulhasnagar area of neighbouring Thane district of Maharashtra with her family members. Her father is into timber business, the official said. The woman is well qualified but is mentally unstable, the police said.

The Mumbai traffic police's WhatsApp number on Saturday received a message from an unknown number threatening that if Adityanath did not resign from the CM's post within 10 days, then he would be killed like NCP leader Baba Siddique, the official said. During the probe, the police found Khan had sent the message, he said.

The Mumbai Anti-Terrorism Squad (ATS) in a combined operation with the Ulhasnagar police traced the woman and apprehended her, the official said. Further investigation was on into the matter, the official added.

The police are on alert as Adityanath is likely to come to Maharashtra for campaigning for 20 November state assembly polls, as per officials.

Former Maharashtra minister Baba Siddique was shot dead in Mumbai's Bandra area on 12 October. *—PTI*

Yogi Adityanath **PHOTO: PTI**

- The police are on alert as Adityanath is likely to come to Maharashtra for campaigning for 20 November state assembly polls

Democratic leader Makhija: India-US ties important

PHILADELPHIA, 3 NOV

India-US partnership is the most important engagement globally and the cooperation will flourish further if Kamala Harris becomes the US president as she recognises the significance of the relationship, prominent Indian-origin Democratic leader Neil Makhija has said.

In an exclusive interview with PTI, the young leader, considered to be close to Harris, also came down very hard on former president Donald Trump for his immigration policy that has triggered some concerns among immigrant communities in the US, including Indian-Americans.

On the India-US partnership, Makhija said it is the most important relationship for the future.

"When you think about the competition the US has been having with China, when you think about the actions that Russia is taking which are at odds with the interests of the US and its allies, India is really the most important country for the US to continue to build the relationship in terms of its sheer size, economic activities," he said. Makhija said it is very important that the next US president understands that India is a very crucial partner for the US in many ways. *— PTI*

UNION MINISTER SURESH GOPI BOOKED FOR 'MISUSING' AMBULANCE

THRISSUR, 3 NOV

A case was regsitered against Union Minister Suresh Gopi and two others for "misusing" an ambulance during the Thrissur Pooram festivities in April this year, police said on Sunday.

Thrissur East Police on Sunday registered an FIR against the Union Minister of State for Petroleum, Natural Gas and Tourism, Abhijith Nair and an ambulance driver in this regard.

The case was registered following a complaint filed by KP Sumesh, a local CPI leader, seeking legal action against Gopi for allegedly misusing an ambulance to reach the Pooram venue flouting police restrictions.

According to the FIR, Gopi, who was the then BJP candidate in Thrissur Lok Sabha constituency, and the other accused acted as part of the election campaign strategy and travelled in an ambulance by Seva Bharati, violating police restrictions. *—PTI*

Suresh Gopi **PHOTO: PTI**

Jamiat cautions TDP and JD(U) if Waqf bill is passed

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Jamiat Ulema-e-Hind intensified its opposition to the Waqf (Amendment) Bill on Sunday, urging TDP's Chandrababu Naidu and JD(U)'s Nitish Kumar to respect Muslim sentiments regarding the legislation. At the 'Save Constitution Convention' held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, Jamiat chief Maulana Arshad Madani warned that the BJP-led government at the Centre, which he described as reliant on two "crutches" Naidu and Kumar would not be able to avoid accountability if the bill passes.

Madani expressed disappointment over Naidu's absence but acknowledged the presence of TDP vice president Nawab Jan, viewing it as a positive gesture of support.

He cautioned that should the Waqf Bill proceed without consideration for the feelings of the Muslim community, the government's allies would share responsibility. The Jamiat has also planned a significant gathering, likely to draw half a million Muslims, in Naidu's area. *—PTI*

AMID ATTACKS

Biscuits play key role in J&K anti-terror operations

SRINAGAR, 3 NOV

In a well-coordinated anti-terror operation in Jammu and Kashmir, security forces eliminated Usman, a high-profile commander from the Pakistan-based terror group Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT). The operation, marked by strategic planning and some unconventional tactics, took place on Saturday in Srinagar's Khanyar locality—making it the first major gunfight in the city in over two years.

Usman, known for his deep familiarity with the region, had been involved in multiple attacks in the Valley since the early 2000s. After spending some time in Pakistan, he re-entered Jammu and Kashmir around 2016-17. Last year, he was linked to the shooting of police inspector Masroor Wani.

PHOTO: PTI

The operation to neutralise Usman involved the combined efforts of the local police and the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF).

Once intelligence pinpointed his location in a densely populated residential area, a careful nine-hour planning session took place. Officials were especially cautious about avoiding civilian casualties, given the close quarters of the neighbourhood.

To prevent this, security teams carried biscuits to keep the dogs quiet as they moved in. The pre-dawn mission began with the forces cordoning off about 30 homes, ensuring Usman couldn't escape.

As the encounter escalated, Usman engaged the security forces with an AK-47, a pistol, and grenades. *—PTI*

Pawan announces Sanatan Dharma protection wing

ELURU, 3 NOV

Janasena Party Chief and Andhra Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Pawan Kalyan on Saturday announced the formation of 'Narasimha Varahi Brigade,' a dedicated wing within his party aimed at protecting Sanatan Dharma. The announcement came as Pawan inaugurated the 'Deepam-2' free cooking gas cylinder scheme in Jagannadhapuram village.

He emphasised that the coalition government prioritises the safety of girls and women.

"Through the Deepam-2 scheme, we are distributing three gas cylinders each year to 1,08,39,286 eligible beneficiaries in the state, at a cost of Rs 2,684 crore per year. Over five years, this amounts to Rs 13,425 crore for welfare. *—ANI*

Vijay's TVK opposes 1 Nation, 1 election, passes resolution

CHENNAI, 3 NOV

Actor Vijay's party, Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK), convened its first executive meeting in Chennai on Sunday, where it took a strong stand against various policies of the ruling central and state governments. One of the primary points raised was TVK's Opposition to the "One Nation, One Election" proposal, which the party criticised as undemocratic. According to Vijay and TVK, the push for simultaneous elections undermines India's democratic structure.

The party also voiced its opposition to the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET). At the national level, TVK condemned the Waqf Amendment Bill 2024, viewing it as an infringement on federal principles.

Vijay **PHOTO: PTI**

—PTI with agencies

Kerala temple fire accident: One more succumbs to burns

KASARAGOD, 3 NOV

One more person, who was injured in the fire accident during a temple festival in this district on 28 October, succumbed to his burns on Sunday. The deceased was identified as Ratheesh, a local who had been under treatment in a private hospital in neighbouring Kozhikode district, the district administration here said in a statement. The 32-year-old man was on ventilator support, the statement said. With this, the number of deaths in the temple fire accident rose to two. According to the Kasaragod district administration, 154 people were injured in the accident and of them, 100 were admitted in various hospitals. The incident occurred late night on 28 October at Anjoottanbalam Veererkavu temple near Neeleswaram when firecrackers stored in the vicinity exploded. —*PTI*

BSF recovers China-made drone in Punjab

AMRITSAR, 3 NOV

The Border Security Force (BSF) troops has recovered a small drone from Kamirpura village, a border area of Amritsar on Saturday, said a release from BSF. After receiving a specific intelligence, BSF troops launched a search operation in the suspected area and at about 5.50pm, they recovered a China-made DJI MAVIC 3 Classic drone from a farming field adjacent to Kamirpura village in Amritsar. The press release said, "On Nov 2, in the evening hours, acting on information of BSF intelligence wing about presence of a drone in the border area of Amritsar district, BSF troops launched a search operation in the suspected area. At about 5:50 pm, BSF troops successfully recovered 1 small drone from a farming field adjacent to village- Kamirpura, in district Amritsar. The recovered drone has been identified as a China-made DJI MAVIC 3 Classic." —*ANI*

SC to hear ex-Army officer's plea to quash rape charges

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a plea filed by a former army officer seeking quashing of a chargesheet against him in an alleged rape case. A bench of Justices Sudhanshu Dhulia and Ahsanuddin Amanullah is likely to hear a plea filed by Capt. Rakesh Walia (retired) challenging an order of the Delhi High Court which dismissed his petition. The petitioner got interested in the offer proposed by the complainant for the promotion of his book, the plea said. According to the petition, on 29 December, 2021, around 6.00pm, the petitioner received a call from the police post in Sector 37, Noida. He was informed that the girl had arrived there around 5pm and attempted to file a complaint, alleging that he had raped her at approximately 4.15 pm after giving her a drink that may have been spiked. —*PTI*

4 hurt in Howrah Mail coach explosion in Punjab

CHANDIGARH, 3 NOV

Four people were injured in an explosion in a general coach of the Howrah Mail near Sirhind railway station in Punjab's Fatehgarh Sahib district, Government Railway Police (GRP) officials said on Sunday. The explosion took place in a plastic bucket containing firecrackers around 10.30pm on Saturday night when the train was headed to Howrah from Amritsar, they said. Four passengers, including a woman, were injured in the incident. Preliminary investigation suggests that the explosion took place in a plastic bucket, which contained some firecrackers, in the general compartment of the train. Samples will be sent to the Forensic Science Laboratory. —*PTI*

ED files chargesheet in digital arrest, I4C issues advisory

ED says scammers operated through 'mule' accounts

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Close on the heels of Prime Minister Narendra Modi urging people to guard against the menace of 'digital' arrests, probe agencies said they are taking action against this category of cybercrime with the Enforcement Directorate (ED) filing a chargesheet in one such case and the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C) issuing a fresh advisory.

ED issued a statement on Saturday, saying it filed a prosecution complaint before a special Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) court in Bengaluru last month against eight accused who allegedly "lured" common people through "fake" IPO allotments and stock market investments through fraudulent apps.

ED said some victims of this scam were "manipulated" under the guise of a fake arrest (digital arrest) by the Customs and the CBI, ultimately making them transfer huge funds to various shell or dummy companies. I4C issued a public advisory on Sunday asking people to "Beware of Digital Arrests" reminding that "those making video calls are not police, CBI, Customs officials or judges". The advisory asked people to not fall for these " tricks" and report such crimes "immediately" by calling the national cybercrime helpline 1930 or logging at the portal www.cybercrime.gov.in.

Modi had during his monthly 'Mann ki Baat' radio address on 27 October flagged the issue of fraudsters targeting people with 'digital' arrests and urged people to adopt the mantra of "stop, think and take action" when faced with such a scam. ED said it booked a money laundering case into this crime after studying multiple police FIRs and it arrested eight people, also named as accused in its chargesheet filed on 10 October, named Charan Raj C, Kiran SK, Shahi Kumar M, Sachin M, Tamilarasan, Prakash R, Ajith R and Aravindan and 24 related companies. "Scammers created 24 shell companies in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and some other states to facilitate the acquisition and laundering of proceeds from cybercrimes," it said.

Scammers operated through "mule" accounts to transfer the funds and the proceeds are ultimately converted into cryptocurrency and transferred abroad, the ED probe found. —*PTI*

ED says some were manipulated under the guise of a digital arrest by the customs and CBI making them transfer huge funds **PHOTO: X**

- The advisory asked people to not fall for these " tricks" and report such crimes "immediately" by calling the national cybercrime helpline 1930 or logging at the portal www.cybercrime.gov.in

TILL OCT 2025

SC status for converts panel gets extension

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has extended by a year the tenure of a commission established to examine whether Scheduled Castes (SC) status can be granted to individuals who have converted to religions other than Sikhism and Buddhism.

This decision, formalised through a notification dated 1 November, comes as the Commission, initially set to conclude its work on 10 October sought additional time to finalise its report.

The Commission of Inquiry was constituted on 6 October, 2022, under the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952.

A presidential order of 1950 put only Dalits f rom the Hindu, Sikh and Buddhist communities on the SC list.

The inquiry also covers related concerns regarding social justice, rights, and the possible extension of reserved

PHOTO: PTI

status to converts from religions not traditionally included in SC classifications, such as Christianity and Islam.

Headed by former Chief Justice of India K G Balakrishnan, the Commission has been engaging with stakeholders, including sociologists, historians, and representatives from affected communities, to better understand the nuances of caste identity in the context of religious conversion, officials said.

According to the latest notification, the Commission is now required to submit its report by 10 October, 2025. —*Agencies*

Teen house help found dead with burn marks; TN couple arrested

CHENNAI, 3 NOV

A 15-year-old girl employed as a domestic helper in Thanjavur, Tamil Nadu, was found dead under suspicious circumstances in the bathroom of her employers' home in Chennai, authorities said on Sunday. Police have arrested used-car vendor Mohammad Nishad, 35, and his wife Nasiya, 32, for the murder.

Initial findings suggest the girl faced severe physical abuse, including burns inflicted with a hot iron and cigarette butts. Police noted marks on her body indicating possible strangulation and other injuries.

They had hired a 16-year-old girl from Tamil Nadu's Thanjavur as a domestic help in the house after the girl's mother had contacted Nasiya.

The alleged torture reportedly intensified on Deepavali, after which she was found unresponsive in the bathroom, ignoring the employers' calls. The victim had been brought to Chennai approximately a year and a half ago to work in a rented home located in Mehta Nagar, Aminjikarai.

The accused couple, allegedly left the girl's body locked in the bathroom and fled to Nishad's sister's residence. Suspicion was raised when the landlord of the rented home observed unusual activity and notified police. Upon forcibly entering the house, officers discovered the girl's body in the bathroom.

Initial investigation revealed that the couple allegedly tortured the girl along with their friend Lokesh on the occasion of Deepavali on 31 October, when she was found dead. Authorities are awaiting a postmortem report from Kilpauk Medical College and Hospital to confirm the cause of death. The young victim is survived by her widowed mother, who remains in Thanjavur. —*Agencies*

PHOTO: PTI

- Suspicion was raised when the landlord of the rented home observed unusual activity and notified police. Upon forcibly entering the house, officers discovered the girl's body in the bathroom

NO RELIEF FROM POLLUTION

Rashtrapati Bhavan is barely visible under a thick layer of smog as air quality remains in 'very poor' category, at Kartavya Path, in New Delhi on Sunday. Delhi's AQI was recorded at 369 at 9am, a significant rise from 290 on Saturday. Several places in Punjab and Haryana saw the air quality settling in the 'very poor' and 'poor' categories on Sunday with Karnal the worst hit with an AQI of 316. Normal AQI is 100 or below **PHOTO: PTI**

No progress on 4 names by CJI collegium

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

There has been no forward movement on the names reiterated by the Supreme Court Collegium headed by Justice DY Chandrachud for appointment as High Court judges as he demits office as the Chief Justice of India on 10 November.

The collegium had in January 2023 reiterated the names of advocates Saurabh Kirpal for elevation as a judge of the Delhi High Court, R John Satyan as judge of the Madras HC, and Amitesh Banerjee and Sakya Sen as judges of the Calcutta High Court.

The top court collegium had also reiterated the name of Somasekhar Sundaresan, also an advocate, as judge of the Bombay High Court in January 2023.

In January 2023, the Supreme Court collegium had for the second time reiterated the names of Banerjee and Sen for appointment as judges of the Calcutta High Court "expeditiously", saying it was not open for the government to repeatedly send back the same proposal.

Justice Sanjiv Khanna will take over as the next CJI on 11 November, a day after Justice Chandrachud demits office and will have a tenure of a little over six months. —*PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Hyd comedian held for reckless driving

HYDERABAD, 3 NOV

Stand-up comedian Ustav Dixit was arrested in Hyderabad in connection with a Porsche car crash, police said on Sunday.

The Porsche car driven by the comedian collided against the boundary wall of KBR Park here at about 5.45am on Friday and hit a tree and caused severe damage to the wall, grills and pavement, a release from Hyderabad Police said.

The car's front portion and wheels were damaged and Dixit escaped from the spot. He was later traced and arrested, they said. After verifying the evidence, Dixit was sent for medical examination for alcohol test and drug tests and other procedures as per the legal provisions, police said. Dixit's original driving license has been seized and is being sent to the Regional Transport Office for disqualification. —*PTI*

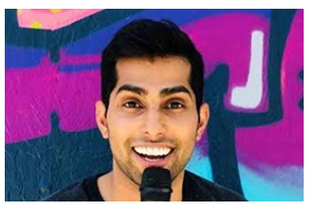


PHOTO: PTI

Heavy rains cause waterlogging across TN

The areas of Thitagudi, Pradyantheru and Mettutheru in Tamil Nadu experienced waterlogging, affecting traffic in the area **PHOTO: ANI**

RAMESWARAM, 3 NOV

Several areas in Rameswaram, Tamil Nadu experienced waterlogging due to heavy rains in the region on Sunday, as the municipal corporation works to eliminate stagnant water from certain low-lying areas. The areas of Thitagudi, Pradyantheru and Mettutheru, experienced waterlogging, affecting traffic in the area.

According to Rameswaram Municipal Chairman KE Nazarkhan, there will be multiple measures taken to ensure that regardless of rainfall, no water stagnation and accumulation will happen.

"Due to the rain in the morning, rainwater has accumulated in some low-lying areas. Stagnant rainwater was promptly disposed of by municipal workers," he said.

"Measures will be taken on a war-time basis so that water does not stagnate anywhere, no matter how heavy the rainfall," he added further.

The India Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a heavy rainfall warning for the period of 2 to 8 November, with multiple states including Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka.

"Heavy to very heavy rainfall very likely over Tamil Nadu and Kerala and Mahe on 1 November and slight decrease thereafter. Gradual fall in minimum and maximum temperature over North and East India by 2-3 during 3-7 November," said the warning. —*ANI*

No 'conspiracy' behind MP elephant deaths: Official

BHOPAL, 3 NOV

A high-level team sent by Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav to the Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve (BTR) following the death of 10 elephants has not come across any "conspiracy theory", one of its members said.

The team comprising MP Minister of State for Forest Pradeep Ahirwar, Additional Chief Secretary Ashok Baranwal and head of Forest Force Aseem Shrivastava on Saturday visited the site inside the reserve where the jumbos died.

Four wild elephants were found dead at Sankhani and Bakeli under the BTR's Khitoli range on 29 October. Four more pachyderms died on 30 October and two the next day.

The autopsy of the carcasses has pointed to toxicity along with huge quantities of kodo millets in their stomachs, as per officials.

The Union Environment Ministry has said that the Wildlife Crime Control Bureau has set up a team. The Madhya Pradesh government has also formed a committee to look into the incident.

Meanwhile, two people were killed and one injured near the BTR on Saturday by three elephants believed to be part of the herd that lost 10 jumbos earlier. —*PTI*

CLIMATE CHANGE

Himalayan lakes expanded 10.8% since 2011

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Glacial lakes and other water bodies across the Himalayan region saw a 10.81 per cent increase in area from 2011 to 2024 due to climate change, signalling a heightened risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), according to a government report.

The Central Water Commission's (CWC) report, which was accessed by PTI, states that with a 33.7 per cent expansion of the surface area, the lakes in India experienced an even more substantial rise.

It also identified 67 lakes in India that witnessed an over 40 per cent increase in surface area, placing them in the high-risk category for potential GLOFs.

Ladakh, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh showed the most notable expansions, signalling a heightened risk of GLOFs and the need for intensified monitoring and disaster preparedness. Glacial lakes and other water bodies across the Himalayan region saw an overall area increase of 10.81 per cent from 5,33,401 hectares in 2011 to 5,91,108 hectares in 2024 due to climate change, the report said. The rapid expansion of these lakes is attributed to accelerated melting of glaciers due to rising temperatures in the region, with potentially severe consequences for downstream communities, infrastructure and biodiversity, it said.

The CWC report also underscored the transboundary risks posed by expanding glacial lakes in neighbouring countries, including Bhutan, Nepal and China. Given the interconnected nature of river basins across the Himalayan watershed, collaboration with these countries is crucial to managing the potential impacts of GLOFs, it underlined. —*PTI*

Ladakh, HP, Uttarakhand, Sikkim and Arunachal Pradesh showed the most notable expansions **PHOTO: X**

NGT targets illegal African catfish breeding in UP

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

The National Green Tribunal (NGT) has ordered action against the alleged illegal breeding and farming of the African catfish in Uttar Pradesh.

Clarias gariepinus, colloquially known as the African catfish or the Thai magur, is banned in India and its farming and breeding are not permissible.

The green body was hearing a plea claiming two people were breeding the banned fish variety in the Shahpur Nij Morta village of Ghaziabad district.

In a recent order, a bench of National Green Tribunal Chairperson Justice Prakash Shrivastava noted a 2019 order of the tribunal, according to which, "Breeding of exotic magur (catfish) is not allowed without the approval of the national committee on exotic fishes and also the state government concerned because of its potential to cause ecological damage in our country."

The bench, said the matter concerning the breeding of exotic catfish or its hybrid Thai magur had been settled by the tribunal by banning it. —*PTI*

Millions of Americans seal their choices

NEW YORK, 3 NOV

At 42 Broadway in New York, the city's Board of Elections office is buzzing with early voting success. Executive Director Michael Ryan and Deputy Vincent Ignizio report an impressive start: over 140,000 New Yorkers cast ballots on the first day of early voting, setting a record. Nationwide, more than 68 million Americans have already voted, according to the University of Florida's Election Lab tracker. The increase in early voting sites up nearly 50% in NYC since 2020 is a key factor in this trend, offering voters more flexibility. At Manhattan's John Jay College polling station, coordinator Suzan notes high turnout and enthusiasm. Voters, like one man there, appreciate the chance to secure their vote ahead of election day. *—PTI*

7 killed, 6 injured as vehicle plunges into gorge in Pak

PESHAWAR, 3 NOV

At least seven people were killed and six others injured after a vehicle plunged into a gorge in northwest Pakistan on Saturday, police said. The accident took place in Buner district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa when the vehicle's brakes failed, causing it to fall into the gorge. Police and rescue officials promptly arrived at the scene, transporting the injured to a nearby hospital for treatment, while the deceased were taken for necessary formalities. Ali Amin Gandapur, Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa expressed deep sorrow over the incident and directed the district administration to ensure timely medical assistance for the injured. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

Thunderstorm causes damage in Oklahoma City

OKLAHOMA CITY, 3 NOV

A tornado and severe thunderstorm struck the Oklahoma City area early Sunday, causing an unspecified amount of damage, according to weather forecasters and local media. There were no immediate reports of injuries. More than 53,000 customers were without power in the state, according to PowerOutage.us. The damage in one neighbourhood included scattered parts of trees and a flipped car, KOCO-TV reported. The National Weather Service issued a tornado watch for the area Sunday morning. A social media post by the agency's office in Norman, Oklahoma, shortly before 1.30 am reported a severe thunderstorm with a tornado moving through eastern Oklahoma City toward Midwest City and Tinker Air Force Base. *—PTI*

Ethiopia prohibits gas-powered vehicle imports

ETHIOPIA, 3 NOV

As fuel prices rose in Ethiopia, Awgachew Seleshi chose an electric car, aligning with the government's recent push to ban gas-powered vehicle imports. However, he soon faced challenges: erratic power in Addis Ababa, expensive Chinese parts, and limited mechanics with EV expertise. Ethiopia, aiming to cut fuel subsidies and promote green tech, became the first nation to ban non-electric car imports. Over 100,000 electric cars enter the country monthly, with plans to increase this to 500,000 by 2030. The Grand Renaissance Dam is expected to supply the electricity needed for this shift. Despite these goals, issues like a lack of charging stations and costly repairs have deterred some buyers. Local mechanics struggle with limited EV tools and parts, while others revert to gas vehicles. Efforts to improve EV infrastructure are underway yet doubts about Ethiopia's readiness for an EV future persist. *—PTI*

Harris makes surprise SNL appearance

Harris promises tax cuts for 100M Americans

NEW YORK, 3 NOV

Vice President Kamala Harris made a surprise appearance on "Saturday Night Live" (SNL) in the final days before the election, playing herself as the mirror-image double of Maya Rudolph's version of her in the show's cold open.

The first lines the candidate spoke as she sat across from Rudolph, their outfits identical, was drowned out by cheers from the audience.

"It is nice to see you Kamala," Harris told Rudolph. "And I'm just here to remind you, you got this." In sync, the two said supporters need to "Keep Kamala and carry-on-ala," declared that they share each other's "belief in the promise of America," and delivered the signature "Live from New York it's Saturday night!"

Harris said if she wins the presidential election, she'll start working on her "to-do list", which includes a tax cut for more than 100 million Americans, a federal ban on corporate price gauging on groceries and making sure Americans can afford a place to live.

Growing up, my mother raised my sister and me to appreciate and honor our heritage. Nearly every other year, we would go to India for Diwali. We would spend time with our grandparents, our uncles, and our chitthis
—Kamala Harris, Vice President

Maya Rudolph and Kamala Harris on 'Saturday Night Live' *PHOTO: X*

Harris made the surprise trip to New York City with the election looming, briefly stepping away from the battleground states where she's been furiously campaigning in favor of NBC's iconic sketch comedy show, where she was hoping to generate buzz and appeal to a nationwide audience. *—PTI*

Trump to rally daily until N Carolina polls

It is the only swing state he won twice

GASTONIA, 3 NOV

Former US president Donald Trump will rally supporters in North Carolina every day until Tuesday's election, a flurry of late activity in the only swing state that he won in both his 2016 and 2020 campaigns.

Even as Trump looks to expand the electoral map and project strength with trips to New Mexico and Virginia, two Democratic states not widely viewed as competitive, he is putting considerable time into North Carolina, which last backed a Democrat for president in 2008. Trump says if he wins the presidential election, he will "rapidly reduce inflation" by ending "Kamala's war on American Energy".

The former president's path to the 270 electoral votes needed to capture the presidency gets significantly more complicated if he loses North Carolina. The fast-growing Southern state gave Trump his smallest margin of victory — 1.3 percentage points — over Democrat Joe Biden four years ago. Trump campaigned in Gastonia, west of Charlotte, and Greensboro on Saturday, with a stop in Salem, Virginia, in between. He will be in the eastern city of Kinston on Sunday and in Raleigh on Monday. *—PTI*

Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump *PHOTO: PTI*

'Trump will remove fluoride from water'

Robert F Kennedy Jr, a prominent proponent of debunked public health claims whom Donald Trump has promised to put in charge of health initiatives, said Saturday that Trump would push to remove fluoride from drinking water on his first day in office. Fluoride strengthens teeth and reduces cavities by replacing minerals lost during normal wear and tear, according to the US Centres for Disease Control and Prevention. *—PTI*

A Russian air attack on Kyiv damaged buildings, roads and several power lines, the capital's military administration *PHOTO: X@JULIANROEPCKE*

Army resisting Russia's fierce offensive: Ukraine

KYIV, 3 NOV

Ukrainian forces are restraining one of Russia's most powerful offensives since the start of Moscow's 2022 invasion, the top commander of Kyiv's forces has said.

Gen Oleksandr Syrskyi, Ukraine's military commander, said: "The armed forces of Ukraine are holding back one of the most powerful Russian offensives from launching a full-scale invasion."

Moscow said on Saturday it had taken two more settlements along the Donbas frontline in eastern Ukraine. Syrski added: "The enemy does not stop assault actions in several directions, using air superiority and long-range firepower, and also has a significant advantage in artillery shells."

Syrskyi said he told the chair of the US joint chiefs of staff, Gen Charles Brown, of the Ukrainian military's "urgent needs" and that Brown assured him of continued US support. Washington said on Friday it would provide an additional $425m in military aid to Ukraine.

A Russian air attack on Kyiv damaged buildings, roads and several power lines, the capital's military administration said early on Sunday, after the military said air defences were trying to repel a drone attack.

—Couresy, The Guardian

4 CHILDREN INJURED

Palestinians say Israel struck clinic during polio campaign

CAIRO, 3 NOV

Palestinian officials say an Israeli drone strike on a clinic in northern Gaza where children were being vaccinated for polio wounded six people, including four children. The Israeli military denied responsibility.

The alleged strike occurred Saturday in northern Gaza, which has been encircled by Israeli forces and largely isolated for the past year. Israel has been carrying out another offensive there in recent weeks that has killed hundreds of people and displaced tens of thousands.

It was not possible to resolve the conflicting accounts. Israeli forces have repeatedly raided hospitals in Gaza over the course of the war, saying Hamas uses them for militant purposes, allegations denied by Palestinian health officials.

Dr Munir al-Boursh, Director General of the Gaza Health Ministry, told The Associated Press that a quadcopter struck the Sheikh Radwan clinic in Gaza City early Saturday afternoon, just a few minutes after a United Nations delegation left the facility.

The World Health Organisation and the UN children's agency, known as UNICEF, which are jointly carrying out the polio vaccination campaign, expressed concern over the reported strike.

At least six were injured, of whom four were children. However, Israeli military denied responsibility *PHOTO: X@TRTWorldNow*

A scaled-down campaign to administer a second dose of the polio vaccine began Saturday in parts of northern Gaza. It had been postponed from 23 October due to lack of access, Israeli bombings and mass evacuation orders, and the lack of assurances for humanitarian pauses, UN said. *—PTI*

Iranian-American journalist detained in Iran

DUBAI, 3 NOV

An Iranian-American journalist who once worked for a US government-funded broadcaster is believed to have been detained by Iran for months now, authorities said Sunday, further raising the stakes as Tehran threatens to retaliate over an Israeli attack on the country.

The imprisonment of Reza Valizadeh, acknowledged to The Associated Press by the US State Department, came as Iran marked the 45th anniversary of the American Embassy takeover and hostage crisis on Sunday.

It also followed Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei threatening both Israel and the US the day before with "a crushing response" as long-range B-52 bombers reached the Middle East in an attempt to deter Tehran. Valizadeh had worked for Radio Farda, an outlet under Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty that's overseen by the US Agency for Global Media. *—PTI*

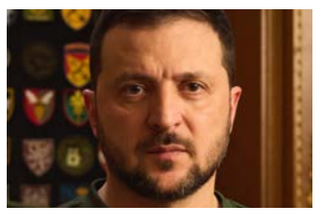
RUSSIAN DRONES USE COMPONENTS FROM CHINA, EUROPE, US: ZELENSKYY

KYIV, 3 NOV

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy sounded the alarm on Russia's escalating attacks, revealing that more than 2,000 Shahed drones and missiles utilising Western components were launched against Ukraine in October alone.

Zelenskyy further stressed the urgent need for enhanced export controls to prevent sanctions evasion and said that Russia's supply chain relies on over 1,70,000 individual components from firms in China, Europe, and the United States.

Sharing a post on X, he said, "Such a massive number of Shaheds requires over 1,70,000 individual components that should have been blocked from reaching Russia. All this is supplied to Russia from abroad. And sadly, including from companies in China, Europe, America - lots of micro-contributions to the constant Russian terror," he added. *—ANI*



Volodymyr Zelenskyy *PHOTO: WIIKIPEDIA*

Moldova votes for Prez in runoff election

CHISINAU, 3 NOV

Maia Sandu *PHOTO: X*

Moldovans will head to the polls on Sunday for a second-round vote to choose between the incumbent pro-EU President, Maia Sandu, and a Russia-friendly challenger.

Despite securing 42 per cent of the vote in the first round, Sandu faces a tough challenge in the runoff against an opposition bloc led by Alexandr Stoianoglo of the Socialist party, which aligns with Moscow.

The election in this small nation of fewer than 3 million people in south-eastern Europe follows a referendum in which a slim majority voted in favour of pursuing membership of the EU. Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, Moldova has gravitated between pro-western and pro-Russian courses. But under Sandu, a former World Bank adviser, the impoverished country has accelerated its push to escape Moscow's orbit amid its war in neighbouring Ukraine.

- Despite securing 42 per cent of the vote in the first round, Sandu faces a tough challenge in the runoff against an opposition bloc led by Alexandr Stoianoglo of Socialist party, which aligns with Moscow

The results of the referendum and first round of the election were marred by allegations of a Moscow-backed vote-buying scheme.

Sandu and her allies have accused Russia and its proxies of leading a large-scale campaign involving vote-buying and misinformation to sway the election.

They accuse the fugitive Moldovan businessman Ilan Shor, a vocal opponent of EU membership, of running a destabilising campaign from Moscow. "Moldova has faced an unprecedented assault on our country's freedom and democracy, both today and in recent months," Sandu told supporters.

—Courtesy, The Guardian

RESPONSE TO NORTH KOREA

S Korea, US, Japan hold joint air drills

SEOUL, 3 NOV

The United States flew a long-range bomber in a trilateral drill with South Korea and Japan on Sunday in response to North Korea's recent test-firing of a new intercontinental ballistic missile designed to strike the US mainland, South Korea's military said.

North Korea on Thursday tested the newly developed Hwasong-19 ICBM, which flew higher and stayed in the air longer than any other missile it has fired. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un called it "an appropriate military action" to cope with external security threats posed by its rivals. On Sunday, the US flew the B-1B bomber to train with South Korean and Japanese fighter jets near the Korean Peninsula, demonstrating the three countries' firm resolve and readiness to respond to North Korea's advancing nuclear and missile programs, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said in a statement.

US Air Fore B-1B bomber, F-16 fighter jets, South Korean Air Fore F-15K fighter jets fly during a trilateral air drill on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

The trilateral aerial training was the second by South Korea, the US and Japan this year, the statement said. The US often responds to major North Korean missile tests with temporary deployments of some of its powerful military assets such as long-range bombers, aircraft carriers and nuclear-powered submarines to and near the Korean Peninsula.

North Korea typically responds angrily to such US actions, calling them part of a US-led plot to invade the North and performing additional weapons tests. The US has flown the B-1B bomber over or near the Korean Peninsula four times this year, according to South Korea's military. A B-1B is capable of carrying a large conventional weapons payload.

Thursday's Hwasong-19 test, North Korea's first ICBM test-firing in almost a year, showed progress in North Korea's missile program. *—PTI*

Lahore grapples with severe air pollution

LAHORE, 3 NOV

Lahore's air pollution has hit record levels, with the AQI reaching a hazardous 1,067 -over 40 times the WHO's safe limit. Deadly PM2.5 particles peaked at 610, far exceeding the recommended 15, creating severe health risks. A thick smog layer from diesel fumes, crop burning, and cool winter air has blanketed the city, with winds from the India border worsening the situation. Areas near the border saw AQI readings up to 1,800. Although a temporary shift in wind briefly improved conditions, officials warn high levels may persist for days, leaving residents anxious and overwhelmed by the toxic air.

Meanwhile, Germany will provide 20 million Euros to Pakistan for the second phase of the Billion Tree Afforestation Support Project in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, aiming to protect and sustainably manage forests, according to a media report. The agreement was signed in Islamabad between Pakistan's Economic Affairs Secretary Dr. Kazim Niaz and KfW Director Esther Gravenkotter.

PHOTO: PTI

The project will involve planting trees on 10,000 hectares, enhancing forest department skills, and creating a management system. Additionally, it aims to support nature-based livelihoods, alleviate poverty. *—PTI/ ANI*

PHOTO:ANI

ONGC draws blank on offer of stake in Deen Dayal gas

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation's (ONGC) third attempt to get a partner to rescue the Deen Dayal gas field in the KG basin in Bay of Bengal has met with the same fate as previous efforts as it got no bids, sources said. The tender offering stake to technical and financial partners in the Deen Dayal field, which ONGC had acquired from a Gujarat government firm for USD 1.2 billion, received no bids, two sources aware of the matter said. The field has produced negligible quantities of gas since ONGC in January 2017. —*PTI*

Dr Reddy's recalls 3.3L bottles of medication in US

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Dr Reddy's Laboratories is recalling over 3.3 lakh bottles of a medication used to treat high calcium levels in the blood and hyperparathyroidism in the US market due to manufacturing issues. According to the latest Enforcement Report by the US Food and Drug Administration, Dr Reddy's is recalling the 3,31,590 bottles of Cinacalcet tablets in multiple strengths in the American market due to CGMP (current good manufacturing practice) deviations. The recall is due to the "presence of N-nitroso Cinacalcet impurity above FDA recommended interim limit", it added. Besides, the drug maker is recalling 35,880 and 10,584 bottles of 60 mg and 90 mg strengths, respectively, USFDA said. The affected lot has been produced in India, it added. —*PTI*

Maruti Suzuki expects festive sales momentum

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

With a record October month behind, the country's largest carmaker Maruti Suzuki India is banking on a "few lakhs marriages" slated for November to carry forward the festive sales momentum, according to a senior company official. The company clocked retail sales of 2,02,402 units last month, which is its highest for any October month on the back of festive sales, breaking the previous record of 1,91,476 units posted in October 2020. With the festive season giving a much-needed boost to sales, Maruti Suzuki India is confident of staying on track with the forecast of 4-5 per cent growth for the ongoing fiscal. On discounts, he said these vary from region to region and market to market. —*PTI*

Cement makers hit by lower sales in Q2

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Major cement manufacturers reported a decline in margins in the September quarter, mainly on account of lower prices, leading to lower sales realisation. Barring three leading cement producers -- UltraTech Cement, Ambuja Cement, and Dalmia Bharat -- other smaller players, including Nuvoco Vistas Corp, JK Cement, Birla Corporation, and Heidelberg Cement, reported a decline in topline and sales volume in the second quarter of the current fiscal year. Industry observers said the increase in sales volume of UltraTech and Ambuja Cements is mainly due to the several acquisitions by both companies that consolidated their position further in the industry. Power, fuel, and other costs, however, largely remained stable for the industry. The all-India average cement price was around Rs 348 per 50 kg bag in June 2024. It decreased 11 per cent year-on-year to Rs 330 per bag in September, though it increased 2 per cent on a month-on-month basis. —*PTI*

FMCG firms worry over high inflation, hint at price hikes

Firms report decline in margins amid squeezing urban mkt

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Leading FMCG companies reported a decline in margins in the September quarter on account of higher input costs and food inflation, which ultimately slowed down the pace of urban consumption.

Rising prices of commodity inputs such as palm oil, coffee and cocoa were also accentuated and some FMCG firms have hinted at a price hike.

HUL, Godrej Consumer Products Ltd (GCPL), Marico, ITC, and Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL) have expressed concerns over squeezing urban consumption, which according to industry experts forms 65-68 per cent of FMCG total sales.

GCPL, makers of Cinthol, Godrej No 1, HIT had a steady quarter given the headwinds of oil costs and tough consumer demand in India and its standalone EBITDA margin was lower, caused entirely by high inflation in palm oil.

PHOTO: X

Another FMCG maker Dabur India also said the demand environment was challenging in the September quarter marked by "high food inflation and a resultant squeeze in urban demand."

The maker of Dabur Chyawanprash, PudinHara and Real juice reported a decline of 17.65 per cent in its consolidated net profit to Rs 417.52 crore and revenue from operations slipped 5.46 per cent to Rs 3,028.59 crore.

Recently, Nestle India Chairman & Managing Director Suresh Narayanan also raised concerns over decline and said "middle segment" is under pressure as high food inflation continues to cripple household budgets.

Nestle India, which owns brands such as Maggi, Kit Kat, and Nescafe also reported a marginal decline of 0.94 per cent and its domestic sales growth was at 1.2 per cent.

HUL, which owns power brands such as Surf, Rin, Lux, Pond's, Lifebuoy, Lakmé, Brooke Bond, Lipton and Horlicks, reported a 2.33 per cent decline in consolidated net profit.

ITC, which operates in the FMCG segment with brands such as Aashirvaad, Sunfeast, Bingo!, YiPPee reported marginal drop of 35 basis points in margins amidst inflationary headwinds in input costs. —*PTI*

PETROLEUM, SUGAR & GEMS

India boosts global share in 3 exports over 5yrs

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

PHOTO: X

India's export competitiveness has witnessed healthy gains in multiple sectors - particularly petroleum, gemstones, agrochemicals and sugar - during the last five years, as these segments have increased their share in global trade, according to the commerce ministry data.

The other sectors where the share of India's exports has increased during 2018 and 2023 are electrical goods, pneumatic tyres, taps and valves, and semiconductor devices.

India has achieved tremendous growth in the export of cane or beet sugar, with its global market share increasing from 4.17 per cent in 2018 to 12.21 per cent in 2023.

India's share of the global market for insecticides and fungicides has also shown healthy improvement.

The country increased its global share from 8.52 per cent in 2018 to 10.85 per cent in 2023, with exports reaching USD 4.32 billion. India is now the third-largest exporter globally against the 5th position in 2018, the data showed.

India now holds a 3.31 per cent share of the global market, up from 2.34 per cent in 2018, and the country has moved up to the eighth position globally from 13th in 2018, indicating the demand. —*PTI*

FPIs withdraw record ₹94,000 cr

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

PHOTO: PTI

- FPIs pulled out Rs 4,406 crore from the debt general limit and invested Rs 100 crore from the debt Voluntary Retention Route (VRR) during the period under review

Foreign investors pulled out a massive Rs 94,000 crore (around USD 11.2 billion) from the Indian stock market in October, making it the worst-ever month in terms of outflows, triggered by the elevated valuation of domestic equities and attractive valuations of Chinese stocks.

Before this, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) withdrew Rs 61,973 crore from equities in March 2020.

The latest outflow came after a nine-month high investment of Rs 57,724 crore in September 2024.

Since June, FPIs have consistently bought equities after withdrawing Rs 34,252 crore in April-May. Overall, FPIs have been net buyers in 2024, except for January, April and May, data with the depositories showed.

According to the data, FPIs recorded a net outflow of Rs 94,017 crore in October. The intensity of net outflows could be gauged from the fact that except for one day, FPIs were net sellers throughout the month, bringing their total investment for 2024 down to Rs 6,593 crore.

This relentless selling resulted in about an 8 per cent decline in benchmark indices from their peaks.

Several factors contributed towards this massive withdrawal of foreign capital from the Indian equity markets in October.

In addition, FPIs pulled out Rs 4,406 crore from the debt general limit and invested Rs 100 crore from the debt Voluntary Retention Route (VRR) during the period under review.

So far this year, FPIs invested Rs 1.06 lakh crore in the debt market. —*PTI*

SBI & ICICI BIGGEST GAINERS

Mcap of 6 of top 10 firms jumps ₹1 lakh cr

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

The combined market valuation of 6 of the top-10 most-valued firms surged Rs 1,07,366.05 crore last week, with State Bank of India and ICICI Bank becoming the biggest gainers.

While Reliance Industries, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, ITC, Hindustan Unilever, and Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) were the gainers, Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, and Infosys faced erosion from their market valuation.

The valuation of State Bank of India jumped Rs 36,100.09 crore to Rs 7,32,755.93 crore.

ICICI Bank added Rs 25,775.58 crore to Rs 9,10,686.85 crore in its market valuation.

LIC's valuation surged Rs 16,887.74 crore to Rs 5,88,509.41 crore and that of Reliance Industries soared Rs 15,393.45 crore to Rs 18,12,120.05 crore.

ITC added Rs 10,671.63 crore, taking its market capitalisation (mcap) to Rs 6,13,662.96 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the most valuable firm of the country followed by TCS, HDFC Bank, Bharti Airtel, ICICI Bank, State Bank of India, Infosys, ITC, Hindustan and LIC. —*PTI*

US polls, Fed rates, FIIs key mkt triggers

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

The 5 November US presidential elections, Federal Reserve interest rate decision, trading activity of foreign investors, and the upcoming quarterly earnings from domestic firms are the major triggers that would influence sentiments in the equity market this week, analysts said.

In an eventful week ahead, a host of macroeconomic data announcements and global trends would also drive the markets, experts said.

"The outlook for the market will be guided by the US presidential election and major macroeconomic data such as HSBC India manufacturing PMI, services PMI, US Fed interest rate decision, US S&P global composite PMI, US S&P global services PMI and BoE (Bank of England) interest rate decision," Palka Arora Chopra, Director, Master Capital Services Ltd, said.

Leading stock exchanges BSE and NSE conducted a one-hour special 'Muhurat Trading' session on the occasion of Diwali on November 1, marking the start of the new Samvat 2081.

Last week, the BSE benchmark climbed 321.83 points, or 0.40 per cent.

Relentless selling by FIIs last month contributed hugely to the over 7 per cent decline in benchmark indices from their all-time peaks. —*PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

For securitisation, SEBI proposes ₹1 cr investment

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Markets regulator SEBI has proposed a minimum ticket size or investment threshold of Rs 1 crore for the RBI-regulated originators and unregulated entities engaged in securitisation activities.

The proposal also introduced limitations on the number of investors in private placements, allowing securitized debt instruments (SDIs) issued privately to be offered to a maximum of 200 investors. If this limit is exceeded, the issuance must be classified as a public issue.

Public offers should remain open for a minimum of three days and a maximum of 10 days, with advertisement requirements aligned with SEBI's regulations for non-convertible securities.

Additionally, the regulator has suggested that all securitized debt instruments should be issued and transferred exclusively in demat form.

The current framework is based on SEBI's 2008 regulations, with updates from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) 2021 directions on securitising standard assets.

Regarding risk management, SEBI has proposed that originators retain a minimum risk retention of 10 per cent of the securitised pool or 5 per cent for receivables with a maturity of up to 24 months.

Meanwhile, SEBI has proposed allowing Real Estate Investment Trusts (REITs), Small and Medium REITs (SM REITs) and Infrastructure Investment Trusts (InvITs) to use interest rate derivatives for hedging risk.

Also, the regulator has suggested approving locked-in units for REITs and InvITs to be transferred among sponsors and their groups, similar to rules for promoters in listed companies, to help sponsors manage their holdings without compromising "skin in the game". — *PTI*

TN advances growth vision with projects

CHENNAI, 3 NOV

Tamil Nadu is progressing on its plan towards registering an all round growth with a slew of projects across business segments focusing on tier 2 and 3 cities.

Chief Minister MK Stalin, soon after assuming office in May 2021, asserted that his government would focus on developing tier 2 and 3 cities along with the metros for an all round industrial growth across the state.

The industries department has emphasised on generating high-quality, high paying jobs in every corner of the State by establishing manufacturing facilities of automobile companies, mini TIDEL Parks and State Industries Promotion Corporation of Tamil Nadu (SIPCOT) industrial parks among others.

Some of the significant projects that assume significance are the Rs 9,000 crore manufacturing plant in Ranipet by automobile manufacturer Tata Motors, setting up of Neo Tidel Parks boosting infrastructure establishment of electric vehicle manufacturing facility by Vietnam based EV maker VinFast in Tuticorin among others.

Another big ticket investments attracted by the Tamil Nadu government to boost industrial growth is from Vietnam-based electric vehicle manufacturer VinFast which has committed investments worth Rs 16,000 crore to establish an electric vehicle car and battery manufacturing facility in Tuticorin.

The solar cells and modules produced at the facility would initially cater to the company's ongoing projects, further strengthening its supply chain. —*PTI*

Punjab paddy procurement crosses 85 lakh tonnes

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Punjab has procured 85.41 lakh tonnes (LT) of paddy valued at Rs 19,800 crore in the ongoing 2024-25 kharif marketing season, with procurement operations now in full swing after initial weather-related delays, the food ministry said on Sunday.

According to the ministry, about 90.69 LT of paddy arrived in mandis across Punjab till November 2, of which 85.41 LT has been procured by state agencies and Food Corporation of India (FCI).

The procurement drive, which began on October 1, has already resulted in payments worth Rs 19,800 crore reaching about 4 lakh farmers across the state.

Centre fixed a procurement target of 185 LT for Punjab PHOTO: PTI

"Though the procurement commenced a bit late due to heavy rain in September and high moisture content in paddy, it is back on track and has picked up in full swing now," the ministry said in a statement.

The Centre has fixed a procurement target of 185 LT for Punjab for the ongoing season. The procurement is being carried out at Rs 2,320 per quintal MSP fixed for 'Grade A' paddy.

To ensure smooth procurement, the state government has operationalised 2,927 designated mandis and temporary yards across Punjab.

The ministry said 4,640 rice millers have applied for paddy shelling operations, with the state government already allocating work to 4,132 millers.

The government undertakes procurement operations through state-owned FCI and agencies at MSP to support farmers. —*PTI*

AMID FESTIVE SEASON

Amazon records highest 140 cr customer visits

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

The festival season coincing with deals on E-commerce platforms has seen a surge of customers queue online. Amazon Great Indian Festival (AGIF) 2024 witnessed its highest-ever customer visits, with 140 crore customers visiting the platform, e-commerce platform Amazon India said in a release.

The e-commerce giant added that among the total customers visiting the platform, more than 85 per cent were from non-metro cities.

AGIF 2024 started on 27 September, with 24 hours of Prime Early Access, giving customers access to more than 25,000 new launches from top brands across categories such as laptops, TVs, smartphones, fashion and beauty, home decor, appliances, furniture, and groceries.

PHOTO: ANI

- The e-commerce giant added that among the total customers visiting the platform, more than 85 per cent were from non-metro cities

AGIF 2024 also set new milestones for seller success and witnessed more than a 70 per cent increase in sellers surpassing a crore in sales compared to last year.

The online marketplace bolstered its fast delivery capabilities, delivering over 3 crore products to Prime members across India within the same or next day -- a staggering 26 per cent increase from the previous year.

AGIF '24 saw over a 70 per cent increase in sellers surpassing Rs 1 crore in sales compared to last year. Small and medium businesses, including women entrepreneurs, weavers, and artisans, sold over 1,000 units every minute during the event.

Amazon India witnessed a travel booking bonanza -- flight reservations grew by 20 per cent, and hotel bookings skyrocketed by 60 per cent YoY, as per the company.

The facility of EMIs fueled big-ticket purchases during the sale. —*PTI*

Govt infuses ₹1,650 cr in RINL amid financial trouble

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

The government has infused around Rs 1,650 crore in state-owned RINL, gripped with operational and financial issues, according to an official document.

The government is also taking various measures to keep RINL as a going concern, the Ministry of Steel said in a note.

"In this regard, the Government of India has infused Rs 500 crore towards equity on 19 September and a working capital loan of Rs 1,140 crore on 27 September," according to the document.

It also said that SBICAPS, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the State Bank of India (SBI), is preparing a report on the sustainability of RINL.

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL), under the Ministry of Steel, is a steel manufacturing company. It owns a 7.5 million tonne plant at Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh. The company has been facing severe financial and operational issues.

Two of the three blast furnaces (BF) were closed till 28 October this year, when the second BF was made operationalised after nearly 4-6 months. The overall dues of RINL have gone above Rs 35,000 crore. —*PTI*

Pant heroics in vain as NZ create history

NZ beat India by 25 runs to clinch series sweep; Ajaz Patel takes 11 wickets in two innings

MUMBAI, 3 NOV

A courageous Rishabh Pant raised hopes of a great escape with his valiant 64-run knock but once he trudged back to the pavilion following a contentious third-umpire call, the Indian fortress, that had been breached twice in this series before, was completed raged by the Black Caps.

With 55 runs needed in the post lunch session and five wickets intact, India's hopes rested on Pant but he ended up falling to a contentious third-umpire call.

Pant had belittled every challenge that New Zealand threw at him, blasting nine fours and a six to make 64 from only 57 balls.

Having not taken a review earlier in the morning session for a leg-before, New Zealand burned one when they took against Pant for a caught-behind but the replays showed Patel's delivery in the 22nd over had neither been in contact with the bat or the gloves.

But on the next, Pant was contentiously adjudged out caught-behind by third umpire. DRS replays showed a tiny spike, which Pant felt was the sound of his bat brushing the pads, but former Australia player and third umpire Paul Reiffel ruled it against the Indian.

India slipped to second in WTC standings, and now need to win four out of five Tests in Australia to make final. *—PTI*

New Zealand team pose for a group picture with the trophy during a celebration after winning the third test match against India by 25 runs, at Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Sunday *PHOTO: X/@ICC*

Losing 3-0 at home is a tough pill to swallow, and it calls for introspection. Was it lack of preparation, was it poor shot selection, or was it lack of match practice?

-Sachin Tendulkar, Ex-Indian cricketer

This has been a terrible performance from our team. The skill to play spin certainly needs an upgrade and in Test cricket doing some needless experimentations just for the sake of it was indeed poor

-Virender Sehwag, Ex-Indian cricketer

Bigger tests lie ahead with the Australia series & the way forward is to introspect, learn and look up! Congratulations to the @ BLACKCAPS on a well-rounded performance and a historic win

-Yuvraj Singh, Ex-Indian cricketer

Something like this will be a very low point of my career: Rohit

MUMBAI, 3 NOV

India captain Rohit Sharma on Sunday described the unprecedented 0-3 whitewash to New Zealand at home as "a very low point of my career" and took full responsibility for the debacle in the Test series. India faced a defeat of this magnitude in their own den for the first time ever after suffering a 25-run defeat in the third Test against New Zealand here. Set a target of 147, India were all out for 121. The hosts also suffered embarrassing defeats in the first two Tests of the series. "Something like this will be a very low point of my career and I take full responsibility for it," Rohit said at the post-match press conference. He added that losing a Test series like this at home is not "easily digestible". There were a lot of mistakes we did," Rohit said. However, Rohit remains doubtful for the first Test of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia in Perth later this month due to personal reasons, with the India skipper on Sunday saying he has his "fingers crossed" on his participation. *—PTI*

Some seniors could be phased out post Australia series: Source

New Delhi, 3 NOV

The future of some senior India players will be decided after the tour of Australia as the BCCI evaluates the shocking 0-3 drubbing against New Zealand at home while rolling out a structured phaseout policy before the start of the next WTC cycle. "Stocks will be taken certainly," a senior BCCI source told PTI. *—PTI*

India A vs Aus A: Kishan involved in ball-change row

SYDNEY, 3 NOV

India A's wicketkeeper-batter Ishan Kishan found himself at the centre of a ball-change controversy during their seven-wicket loss to Australia A on Sunday in the first 'Unofficial Test'. Starting the final day at 139 for 3, Australia A successfully chased the 225-run target as Nathan McSweeney (88*) and Beau Webster (61*) put together an unbeaten 141-run stand. Before play began, a heated exchange unfolded between Indian players and umpire Shawn Craig after he decided to change the ball due to visible scratches. Kishan, calling the decision "stupid," faced a warning from Craig, who cited "inappropriate behaviour" and mentioned a potential dissent report. *—PTI*

Jamshedpur FC, Chennaiyin FC seek urgent recoveries

JAMSHEDPUR, 3 NOV

Chennaiyin FC and Jamshedpur FC will be marching on their retrieval routes in a bid to recover from their recent losses, when they clash in their Indian Super League match here on Monday. The match marks a reunion of friends-turned-foes, with the likes of Owen Coyle, Farukh Choudhary, and Daniel Chima Chukwu returning to their old hunting ground. Coyle had even propelled the Red Miners to championship success in 2021-22, and hence the home fans are likely to give him a warm reception. Both teams have put on a show for their respective fan bases in the current campaign. They have performed as cohesive, well-oiled units, garnering much-needed victories and starting the season on a strong footing. *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

Diksha finishes tied 29th as Hull wins title

RIYADH, 3 NOV

India's Diksha Dagar and Pranavi Urs faced contrasting fortunes even as Charley Hull produced a superb performance at Aramco Team Series to fire a final round 66 (-6) and win by three shots on 18-under par here on Sunday. Diksha shot her best round of the week with a 3-under 69 to jump up to tied 29th at the end of the tournament, while Pranavi (76) slipped to T-44th. Diksha had four birdies against one bogey, while Pranavi had one birdie against five bogeys. Charley Hull who was trailing Pia Babnik by two shots before the start of play on the final day began on an excellent note at Riyadh Golf Club, birdying five of her first seven holes to go out in 31 (-5) and lead by four. With her opponents unable to follow suit, Hull cruised to victory on the back-nine by carding three more birdies and dropping two shots to complete a three-shot| victory. *—PTI*

Golf: Rio Takeda wins Toto Japan Classic

SHIGA, 3 NOV

Rio Takeda of Japan won the LPGA's Toto Japan Classic on Sunday in a playoff that lasted six sudden-death holes, defeating Marina Alex of the United States. It was Takeda's first victory on the LPGA Tour. Takeda had a birdie on the par-5 18th hole, edging Alex with par. The two were tied after 54 holes at 15-under 201. The tournament was restricted to 54 regulation holes after Saturday's third round was washed out by rain. They were also even after the first five playoff holes in the sudden-death format, each with a birdie on the first playoff hole and pars on the next four holes. All of the playoff holes were par-5s — the 18th hole and the 13th. Alex shot a 6-under 66 in the final round and Takeda shot 67. *—PTI*

Sabalenka, Paolini win on opening day

RIYADH, 3 NOV

- Zheng lost the last three games as her focus slipped, and also appeared to have lost track of the score. Zheng headed toward her chair on what she seemed to think was a change of ends instead of going to the net for the traditional handshake

Top-ranked Aryna Sabalenka eased to a straight-set victory over Zheng Qinwen in the opening match of the WTA Finals in Saudi Arabia.

Sabalenka on Saturday won 6-3 6-4 to extend her perfect record against the Chinese player to 5-0. It was also her 21st win in her last 22 matches.

The seventh-seeded Zheng lost the last three games as her focus slipped, and also appeared to have lost track of the score. After hitting a backhand long on match point, Zheng headed toward her chair on what she seemed to think was a change of ends instead of going to the net for the traditional handshake.

She smiled and held up her hand in apology after realising before heading back to the centre.

The victory also sets up Sabalenka for ending the year at the top. The Belarusian player only needs to win two of her three group matches to ensure she retains the No. 1 ranking. Fourth-seeded Jasmine Paolini of Italy beat fifth-seeded Elena Rybakina in the other Purple Group match.

Paolini, who is enjoying a breakout season, edged a tight match 7-6(5) 6-4 on her debut at the year-ending tournament for the top eight ranked players. *—PTI*

MALVIKA FINISHES RUNNER-UP AT HYLO OPEN

SAARBRUECKEN, 3 NOV

Rising Indian shuttler Malvika Bansod's impressive run at the Hylo Open Super 300 concluded with a runner-up finish, as she fell to Denmark's Mia Blichfeldt 10-21, 15-21 in the final on Sunday.The 23-year-old southpaw, who claimed notable wins en route to her first Super 300 final, including a victory over Nguyen Thuy Linh, struggled to match Blichfeldt's pace, conceding the match in 43 minutes.

In the opening game, Blichfeldt capitalised on Malvika's errors, reeling off eight consecutive points to establish a 17-10 lead, ultimately closing out the game with ease. Malvika fought back in the second game, even leading 11-8. However, Blichfeldt's powerful cross-court smashes allowed her to equalise at 12-all, then capture five consecutive points to secure the title. *—PTI*

17 MEDALSHAUL

Parthavi, Vanshika, Hemant win gold in U-19 Boxing c'ship

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Parthavi Grewal, Vanshika Goswami and Hemant Sangwan punched their way to gold as Indian boxers made a strong impression, clinching a haul of 17 medals at the inaugural U-19 World Championships organised by World Boxing in Colorado, USA.

It was the female boxers who stole the show with as many as 10 of them standing on the podium at the age group tournament. While Parthavi notched a dominant 5-0 win over Netherlands' Aaliyah Hoppema in the women's 65kg final Vanshika emerged victorious in the woman's +80kg category against Germany's Victoria Gatt by Referee Stops Contest (RSC) one minute and 37 minutes on Saturday.

In the next bout, Hemant clinched India's sole gold medal in the men's category by securing a 4-1 split decision victory over the USA's Rishon Sims in the 90kg category. Nisha (51kg), Supriya Devi Thokchom (54kg)and Kritika Wasan (80kg) lost their respective finals to sign off with silver medals.

Indian contingent pose for a group photograph on Sunday *PHOTO: X/@BFI_OFFICIAL*

This significant medal count was highlighted by the contributions of 11 Khelo India Athletes (KIAs), of which eight are SAI National Centre of Excellence (NCOE) trainees.

Medal-winning Khelo India Athletes
Boys - Sumit, Lakshay Rathi, Krrish Pal (all NCOE Rohtak), Aryan, Rishi Singh.
Girls - Krisha Verma (NCOE Aurangabad), Chanchal Chaudhary, Nisha, Vini, Akansha Phalaswal (all NCOE Rohtak), Supriya Devi.

Medal-winning NCOE Athletes:
NCOE Rohtak – Parthavi, Vanshika (Gold), Chanchal, Nisha, Vini, Akansha, Kritika (Silver), Krrish Pal, Sumit, Lakshay Rathi (Bronze).
NCOE Aurangabad – Krisha Verma (Gold).

Overall medal winners:
Gold: Krisha Verma (F75kg), Parthavi Grewal (F65kg), Vanshika Goswami (F+80KG), Hemant Sangwan (M90kg).
Silver: Nisha (F51kg), Supriya Devi Thokchom (F54kg), Kritika Wasan (F80kg), Chanchal Chaudhary (F48kg), Anjali Singh (F57kg), Vini (F60kg), Akansha Phalaswal (F70kg), Rahul Kundu (M75kg).
Bronze: Rishi Singh (M50kg), Krrish Pal (M55kg), Sumit (M70kg), Aryan (M85kg), Lakshay Rathi (M90+kg). *—PTI*

ZVEREV WINS PARIS MASTERS

Germany's Alexander Zverev wins the Paris Masters on Sunday by defeating home hope Ugo Humbert 6-2, 6-2 in a dominant display. Zverev, 27, now boasts seven ATP 1000-level titles *PHOTO: X/@ROLEXPMASTERS*

NorthEast sink Odisha in 5-goal thriller

GUWAHATI, 3 NOV

A brilliant brace from Alaaeddine Ajaraie and a goal by Guillermo Fernandez off the bench saw NorthEast United FC prevail over Odisha FC 3-2 in a thrilling Indian Super League match here on Sunday. Hugo Boumous and Diego Mauricio found the net for the visitors but couldn't salvage anything from the five-goal fiesta. Like most of their matches this season, the Highlanders started the game strong. They were energetic with their press and allowed no time on the ball for the Odisha FC backline, forcing them to resort to long balls.

NorthEast United FC's attacking quartet of Parthib Gogoi, Nestor Albiach, Jithin MS and Ajaraie tormented the Odisha FC defenders with their marauding runs and exceptional understanding. Despite the early flourish, Odisha FC did well to absorb the pressure but Ajaraie had other ideas. The hosts were eventually rewarded for their start when the Moroccan combined with Parthib and found a pocket of space just outside the penalty area.

Ajaraie pulled the trigger from distance after taking a couple of touches, beating Amrinder Singh all ends up and handing NorthEast United FC the lead in the 12th minute. With this goal, Ajaraie scored in seven consecutive appearances in the league, surpassing Elano Blumer's earlier record (6 games). *—PTI*

Men hockey c'ship: 31 teams to fight for top honours

CHENNAI, 3 NOV

A total of 31 teams will fight for the top honours at the 14th edition of the Hockey India Senior Men National Championship set to begin here on Monday.

The 31 teams were divided into eight pools, and the tournament will conclude on 16 November. During the league stage, each team will play against every other side in their pool. The top team from each pool will advance to the quarterfinals to be played on 13 November, followed by semifinals on 15 November, and the final and 3rd/4th place play-off match on 16 November.

Pool A features defending champions Hockey Punjab along with Dadra & Nagar Haveli And Daman & Diu Hockey and Chhattisgarh Hockey.

Pool B includes Hockey Haryana, Telangana Hockey, Hockey Himachal, and Hockey Mizoram, while Pool C comprises Hockey Unit of Tamil Nadu, Hockey Madhya Pradesh, Hockey Andhra Pradesh, and Hockey Andaman & Nicobar.

Pool D consists of Hockey Karnataka, Hockey Chandigarh, Hockey Uttarakhand, and Tripura Hockey. In Pool E, Hockey Association of Odisha will compete with Le Puducherry Hockey, Hockey Rajasthan, and Hockey Arunachal, while Pool F includes Uttar Pradesh Hockey, Delhi Hockey, Kerala Hockey, and Hockey Jammu and Kashmir. *—PTI*

'PREPARING FOR FUTURE'

Downfall helped me develop patience: Bhaker

NEW DELHI, 3 NOV

Double Olympic medallist pistol shooter Manu Bhaker has said that the struggles she had faced early on in her career has helped her develop patience and resilience.

Bhaker, 22, created history at the Paris Games by becoming the first Indian in the post Independence era to win two medals in a single edition of the Olympics.

The star shooter is least bothered about her critics and is simply focussed on her career. "I am really happy that I have already seen the downfall phase, it has taught me a lot of patience. It doesn't really bother me, what people talk on the social media. Honestly, I don't need to cope up with that, why would I need to do that?

Manu Bhaker receives a grand welcome in Jhajjar, Haryana. She is now pursuing a Master's degree from Panjab University *PHOTO: ANI*

"I want to thank people who have been there for me throughout my journey. I am also thankful to people who are really appreciating me, thinking and talking about my journey, keen to ask me about that," she added.

Bhaker, who took a break from shooting after the Paris Olympics, is now pursuing a Master's degree from Panjab University. She said the break is just a pause that allows her to reset her goals while still preparing for future competitions.

"We (Jaspal Rana and me) are in touch and it is not a complete break. So it is a break only from shooting and it is not a break where you can do whatever you want to do in life," she said. *—PTI*